

Luke

Bible Commentary 2021

by

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Messages From An Angel – Luke Chapter 1

Luke 1:1-4

Luke dedicated this historical record of the life of Jesus Christ to his friend Theophilus. From the way this dedication was worded we assume Theophilus was an important person. Evidently he was a Christian and knew Luke in some capacity. Luke wrote this account of the life of Jesus Christ to help Theophilus and also provided a document which was included in the canon of the Holy Bible.

The gospel of Luke is scripture and is inspired by the Holy Spirit to help us understand the history of the Lord Jesus Christ, his life, his ministry, his death, and his resurrection. Luke also recorded the history of the early church in the book of Acts.

The gospel of Luke is different in that it records the history of how the Lord Jesus was born in a manger, the events surrounding his birth, and his early life.

Luke was included in what theologians call the synoptic gospels, which is Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

Though Luke may have written this for one person it has touched millions of lives. How often do we in our Christian life think we are just helping one person, but in the end, we may find out that many lives were touched through our serving one person. We won't know until we get to heaven how many others were blessed through our helping one person.

Luke 1:5-23

Zacharias served in the temple as a priest burning incense. He was part of a large group of people who took turn serving in the temple. It was his turn and when he went in to burn the incense an angel appeared to him. This angel had a message for Zacharias. The name of the angel was Gabriel. How do we know this? The angel told Zacharias his name. Gabriel told him his name when he rebuked him. Zacharias did not believe Gabriel's message.

Gabriel's message was that Zacharias' wife would have a son who would grow up to be a prophet. His son, who became John the Baptist, would prepare the way for the Messiah, the Lord Jesus. As we learn in this chapter, these were all related to one another. Zacharias' wife, Elisabeth, was related to Mary the mother of Jesus. Jesus and John the Baptist were cousins.

Gabriel told Zacharias to name the son John and gave specific instructions on how the boy would be raised and grow up. These instructions were similar to the laws regarding a Nazarite in the Old Testament. It was also similar to instructions that an angel gave to the parents of Samson in the book of Judges.

Because Zacharias did not believe the message he was stricken dumb until John was born. He was disciplined for his unbelief by the angel. Unbelief at God's word is very dangerous. We should hear God's word's, receive God's word, and believe God's word. Walk in agreement with the truth in God's word.

When the time of his ministry was complete Zacharias returned home. Everyone knew something happened to him in the temple and that he had a vision.

Angels are real. God sends angels to intervene in the lives of people on earth. Sometimes God sends an angel to give a message to people under certain circumstances. Whatever message an angel has it should not contradict the written word of God. If it does then the angel is not from the Lord but is false. Also, an angel will never accept worship. An angel from the Lord will point you to the Lord Jesus Christ and not to its own self.

God hears our prayers. This is an example of how a man prayed for something but evidently did not have faith his prayer would be answered. Another example of this is in the book of Acts when Christians prayed for Peter to be released and when he was released they did not believe it. It is interesting to me how God answers some prayers when people do not really have faith the prayer will be answered. This fact contradicts the false doctrine of the prosperity gospel.

This chapter is filled with the supernatural. When Christians try to minimize the supernatural part of the Bible they end up with dry morality and dead religion like Zacharias. Obviously Zacharias went through the religious routines. He did not expect to hear from God or receive an answer to his prayer. We should have an attitude of expecting God to hear our prayer and answer our prayer. Let's sing the song of faith before the Red Sea is parted. Before we are delivered let us praise God for the deliverance so that we can learn more of who the Lord is and experience his presence in our lives.

Luke 1:26-38

Six months after Gabriel appeared to Zacharias at the temple he also appeared to Mary. He told her that she would have a son and his name would be called Jesus. Gabriel told Mary that Jesus would be great and would be called the Son of the Highest and that the Lord God would give him the throne of his father David. He would reign over the house of Jacob and his kingdom would have no end.

Part of this prophecy from Gabriel is still yet in our future today. The Lord Jesus will yet return to the earth and sit upon the throne of David in Jerusalem and reign over all the nations of the earth with a rod of iron. This is described for us in the book of Revelation.

Mary had questions about how this prophecy would happen but she did not have an attitude of unbelief as Zacharias. She was not disciplined or rebuked in the same way as Zacharias. Mary believed the word which the angel spoke to her.

The angel told Mary that the Holy Ghost would come upon her and she would conceive a son. The angel told Mary that her cousin Elisabeth was also expecting a son.

Verse 37, *"For with God nothing shall be impossible."*

I need to remember this in my life. With God nothing is impossible. I have hope because I do not yet know what the Lord can do in my life. Consider the account of Job in the Bible and remember that the Lord is merciful and filled with compassion for his servants.

Nothing is impossible with the Lord.

Mary believed the message from Gabriel.

Within this prophecy from Gabriel we also have a future hope that the Lord Jesus will return again to this earth and reign over the nation of Israel. We have not yet seen the complete fulfillment of this prophecy. However, since we know that the word which Gabriel said to Mary was fulfilled we know also that the rest of this prophecy will be fulfilled as well. The Lord Jesus will sit upon the throne of David and rule over the nation of Israel. Do we believe this message as Mary did? Or do we have the attitude of Zacharias who did not believe and was rebuked by the Lord.

Let us have faith and believe in God's word. Nothing is impossible with the Lord. He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we could ever ask or think.

Luke 1:39-45

Elizabath receives a revelation when she was filled with the Holy Spirit. What did she know? She knew that Mary was carrying a baby who was the Messiah. She said that Mary was the mother of her Lord. She also knew that Mary believed the word from the angel Gabriel. This stands in contrast to Zacharias who did not believe the word of the angel and was disciplined for his unbelief.

I don't think Elizabeth knew this information before Mary came to visit her simply because of how this was recorded by Luke. This was the first contact Mary and Elizabeth had and it seems from a straight forward reading of these verses that Elizabeth did not know any of these things before Mary showed up. She received knowledge from the Holy Spirit when she heard Mary's greeting. This might be called a "word of knowledge" from the Lord and it is a very real spiritual gift from the Holy Spirit. Revelation like this from the Lord is real.

What did Elizabeth say? She called Mary "blessed" and also the fruit of her womb "blessed". She was blessed because God chose her to be the mother of the Lord Jesus Christ.

There was great humility in Elizabeth's words. She was surprised that the mother of the Messiah would come and visit her. This shows that Elizabeth did not think of herself more highly than she ought but she considered herself with sober judgment.

She shared with Mary that the baby inside her leaped with joy when he heard the voice of Mary. This shows there was a deep connection between John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus Christ. That connection was the Holy Spirit of God.

Christian brothers and sisters have this connection as well. I've never known in my life more joy than when I find a true brother in Christ. It is truly the greatest joy in my life to fellowship with another brother in Christ and to encourage one another in our faith in the Lord Jesus. Some of my greatest moments of happiness were over an open Bible with another brother or sister in Christ.

This passage also reminds me of how important it is to show hospitality to others and be ready to drop everything when someone shows up. You never know you might be entertaining angels without realizing it.

Luke 1:46-56

Mary's response to the greeting of Elizabeth was to give praise and honor and glory to God. From her innermost being she gave praise to God and rejoiced in the Lord. She acknowledged it was the Lord who chose her and that she had done nothing to commend herself to God. It was the Lord who singled her out for the blessing of being the mother of the Messiah. She realized that all generations would remember her and consider her blessed by the Lord. This realization was her agreement with the truth stated by the angel Gabriel and her agreement with the words of Elizabeth. She did not lift herself up as someone to be praised but rather she acknowledged the truth about her participation in eternal history.

Mary taught us something about the character and nature of God in her song of praise. She said that God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. This is a revelation of God which goes through the entire Bible and it is the character of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus always opposed the proud and gave grace to the humble.

Mary remembered the promise given to Abraham and his seed forever. Mary understood the promise of the Messiah which was the seed of the woman. This was revealed in Genesis when God promised the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent. This prophecy was fulfilled at Calvary when the Lord Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and rose again on the third day.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise him all earth below! Hallelujah, for the Lord God Almighty reigns.

Luke 1:57-66

Elizabeth gave birth to John. Her relatives wanted to give him another name but she insisted on calling him John. Everyone was confused by this because usually a child was named after a close relative and there was no one in that family named John. The relatives turned to Zacharias to see what he wanted to name John. He asked for something to write on and he wrote the boy's name was John like the angel

Gabriel told him. When Zacharias did this he was released from his dumbness and was able to speak again. The first thing he said was praise to God.

We can learn a lot from the account of Elizabeth, Zacharias, and John. One thing I've learned is that when we obey God it sets us free. When Zacharias obeyed the Lord he was set free and able to speak again. Instead of unbelief he was filled with faith and praise to God.

Another thought is that when God does something in our life it is never for just us alone. Everyone in that entire area was touched by what happened to Elizabeth, Zacharias, and John. Everyone was in awe and wonder at what God did and they all knew God had special plans for John. Everyone remembered what happened. They laid it up in their hearts which was the same phrase used to describe how Mary remembered everything which happened to her.

I know in my life when God touched me I remember it. I had a few times in my life when God spoke to me or touched me and I never forgot. I stored up the works of God in my heart so I can remember in the future that God is real, and he loves me, and he has a plan for my life.

Jesus Christ is God the Son and he is the Son of God. He died on the cross for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

Luke 1:67-80

When Gabriel's word was fulfilled Zacharias got his voice back. He wrote down the name of his son was John and at that moment got his voice back.

The first thing he did was give honor, glory, and praise to the Lord Jesus.

I've noticed there is a pattern in this chapter. The angel Gabriel spoke to Zacharias and Mary and told them they would have sons, one a prophet, and the other the Messiah. These two accounts are tied together by the angel Gabriel. Also, in both cases, the fulfillment of the prophecy brought further prophecy out of the mouth of Mary and Zacharias. There is a multiplication of praise, worship, and proclaiming God's word. There is multiplied revelation of who God is and what God does in our lives.

We see this continues even to this day. God's word stands before us. We receive God's word, we believe God's word, and as a result, our lives bring honor, glory, and praise to God. We open our mouth and we speak and the Lord speaks through us to others. The word of God is not bound by time, or space, or distance. The word of God is not bound, but continues to multiply, and spread, and touch the lives of those who hear, receive, and believe. We become a vessel of God's word to reach the next generation of those who hear, receive, and believe.

Zacharias knew the plan of God for the life of his son John. He said that John was a prophet and would go before the Lord to prepare the way for him.

Verse 80, "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel."

There's a lot packed in that verse. We grow stronger spiritually when we are hid with God in the desert. It is through suffering that we learn obedience. It is on the backside of the desert that we learn how weak and helpless we are. It is in that place we are humbled and so we learn that we do not live by bread alone but by every word which proceeds from the mouth of the Lord do we live.

Born In A Stable – Luke Chapter 2

Luke 2:1-7

The account of the birth of Jesus Christ was contained within a historical context. Luke recorded the names of Caesar Augustus, and Cyrenias. He described the Roman tax edict which forced people to relocate temporarily to their hometown. Through this movement of the government the Lord fulfilled his word that the Lord Jesus would be born in the city of Bethlehem. The King of kings and Lord of lords was born in a stable and laid in a manger. This was how God decided he would be born into the world. As a babe in a manger. This revealed something fundamental about the character and nature of God.

It also shows us that the kingdom of God is radically different from the world system we live in. The world system is based upon the names of men who make themselves famous. They exalt their own names and in this way control other men. They force men to submit to their names and the more people they bring under their name the more power (provision, protection, and portion) they create. This is the way of Satan.

The way of the Lord Jesus is completely opposite. The kingdom of God is not based on the pride of life. It is based on humility and love. Read Philippians chapter 2 to see a description of the humility of the Lord Jesus.

When we truly understand this principle it reveals the stark contrast between the Lord Jesus and the way churches, businesses, and our daily lives are conducted in this world. We are far, far away from the kingdom of God in this current world system.

This world is passing away. The Lord Jesus came into this world as a babe in a manger, and when he grew up he told others he had no place to lay his head. Those who followed him became like him. They lose more and more of this world but gain more and more of the kingdom of God.

There was no room for them in the inn. This summarized the attitude of most people toward the Lord Jesus. They did not make any room for him in their lives. Yet he was the most important person who ever lived on this planet. He was greater than any king or president or celebrity who ever lived. Why can't people understand this? Because they have made their agreement with Satan and he blinded their eyes to the truth of the majesty and greatness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Their agreement with Satan blinded their eyes and they could not see the Lord Jesus Christ.

Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is saved. Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Believe in your heart that God raised Jesus Christ from the

dead, and confess with your mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord and you will be saved. Saved from self, saved from sin, saved from the devil, saved from this world system, and saved from a lake of fire.

Luke 2:8-21

Angels from heaven appeared to a group of shepherds in a field at night. The shepherds were terrified but the angels told them not to be afraid because they brought good news of the birth of the Messiah. The angels told the shepherds where to find the newborn Messiah. The sign to look for was a baby lying in a manger. Notice how much was made of the fact that the King of the Universe was born in a stable and laid in a manger. God was drawing attention to his character and his nature. Who is God? Look at this lowly stable and manger and behold the God of the Universe.

The shepherds did what the angels said and found the Lord Jesus lying in the manger. They told everyone in that area about what they saw, heard, and experienced regarding the Lord Jesus Christ. This was normal for anyone who had truly come into contact with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Joseph and Mary circumcised Jesus on the eighth day according to the law and gave him the name Jesus. He was given the name Jesus by the angel Gabriel before he was conceived, just like John the Baptist.

God knows our name. Many people say that they know their Lord Jesus, but does Jesus know them? Does he know their name?

Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose from the dead on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of Jesus is saved. He is returning again to receive us unto himself that where he is we may be also. May the Lord Jesus return quickly to this earth and establish his kingdom over all the nations of the earth.

Luke 2:22-40

In these scriptures we see angels from the Lord announcing the arrival of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. Angels appeared to Zacharias, Mary, and to shepherds. Here we see the proclamation of the Son of God was given to two prophets who were in the temple when Joseph and Mary brought the child there to present him to the Lord.

The first prophet was Simeon. He was glad to see the child because it meant his earthly journey was almost over and he was ready to be with the Lord in heaven. He also blessed Mary and Joseph and had a personal word of prophecy for Mary that a sword would pierce her heart. No doubt this word was for when the Lord Jesus died upon the cross and Mary was there and saw him executed.

The other prophet was Anna. She was a godly woman who had served God in fasting and praying for many years since her husband died. She also gave thanks to the Lord and acknowledged that this child was the promised Messiah of God.

Once Joseph and Mary completed all the requirements of the law regarding a newborn son they returned to Nazareth and the Lord Jesus grew up, strong in spirit, and the grace of God was upon him. The scripture describes Jesus as being full of wisdom.

This was a good example of how God used believers to confirm a word of God. It shows us how the church can work together to encourage one another and to build up the faith of one another. It also shows us that the Lord reveals specific truths to individuals and those individuals then have a responsibility to share with others.

Every Christian should share the gospel of Jesus Christ. Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Let us encourage one another, share the gospel, and build up the faith of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Luke 2:41-52

Mary and Joseph went up every year to the feast of the Passover at Jerusalem. When Jesus was twelve years old he went with them to Jerusalem. When the feast was over they went back home but Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem at the temple. They did not realize that Jesus was missing for an entire day! Finally they found him after three days!

The Lord Jesus amazed the people who were in the temple with his questions. He listened to them and asked questions. Everyone who listened to him were amazed at his understanding and answers.

Understandably Mary and Joseph were upset with Jesus when they found him. The Lord Jesus replied, "Didn't you know I had to be about my father's business?" Mary and Joseph did not understand his answer, which was a question.

The Lord Jesus went with them down to Nazareth and was subject to them. Mary remembered all of these events in the life of Jesus and pondered them in her heart.

The Lord Jesus continued to grow in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.

I don't think this account should be interpreted as Jesus being rebellious towards his parents. I don't think his attitude was one of rebellion. However, as in this example, we see in the life of Jesus many time people did not understand his purpose, his mission, and why he did what he did. Even his own disciples tried to stop him from going to the cross at Calvary. Jesus was not turned aside from this goal, and that was to complete his Father's will.

How can we apply this to our life? Do we have this single minded goal and purpose? Is our goal in life to please God? Is our goal in life complete obedience to Gods' will for our life?

Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day, according to the scriptures. Everyone who calls upon the name of Jesus is saved. Cry out to God most high, unto God who performs all things for us.

John The Baptist – Luke Chapter 3

Luke 3:1-38

I'm taking this whole chapter at once because most of the second half of this chapter is a list of the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ. This genealogy is important but I'm not going to focus much on that in my notes here. Instead, I will focus on the ministry of John the Baptist in the first half of the chapter.

Just as Gabriel and Zacharias prophesied the baby John grew up to become a prophet of the Lord. He fulfilled the word in Isaiah of a man who came to prepare the way of the Lord. He was a voice crying in the wilderness.

What happened when John began to preach? Immediately the devil sent people to oppose this new work of God. John recognized the snakes and called them out.

Verse 7, *"O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"*

Anytime the Lord sends a man of God to proclaim his word there will be opposition from the forces and powers of the devil. The power of Satan will be manifest by insincere people who are his mouthpiece.

The prophet Jeremiah also suffered opposition from people like this. Even his own close relatives wanted to kill him. But God promised Jeremiah he would protect him and deliver him. (Jeremiah 15:20-21)

The Lord delivered Jeremiah from the attack of evil men but in the case of John the Baptist God allowed him to be put in prison and eventually he lost his life. This is the case for many in the New Testament. The majority of the apostles and disciples lost their lives as a result of preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. We must be prepared for this.

The Lord Jesus came to be baptized by John the Baptist. He did this to fulfill all righteousness. He had no sin himself but he came to identify himself completely with sinful man. God the Father set his seal of approval upon his Son at this time and the Holy Spirit descended upon the Lord Jesus Christ. Here we can plainly see that God is three in one: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

God is three in one. Prophet, priest, and king. Israel, church, and the nations. Three days and all will be complete in the New Jerusalem.

The Devil Goes To Church – Luke Chapter 4

Luke 4:1-13

The Lord Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit and led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness for forty days. During this time the Lord Jesus was tempted by the devil. Forty days reminds me of the forty

years that Israel was in the wilderness and tested. There are a lot of parallels in scripture like this. This is one way the Holy Spirit teaches us spiritual lessons. Testing and walking in the wilderness is a normal part of the Christian life. Temptation is a necessary part of the Christian life. The Lord Jesus taught us how to overcome temptation. If you compare this temptation with the temptation of the serpent and Eve you can see parallels. Also, the scripture in 1 John 2:16 sheds spiritual light upon these temptations as well.

The Lord Jesus overcame the devil by staying in the word. He was abiding in the word of God. His heart and his mind was filled with the scriptures. He was filled with the word and he was filled with the Holy Spirit. This points us back to two types of manna in the wilderness: manna that tasted like honey (the word), and manna that tasted like fresh oil (Holy Spirit). Do you know what the third category of manna was in the wilderness? It was manna taken and put in a pot and hidden in the ark of the covenant. (Hebrews 9:4)

The Lord Jesus had authority to overcome the devil because he walked in the word and walked in the Spirit. Any man who walks in the word and in the Holy Spirit receives the authority of God's kingdom to overcome the devil. We overcome the enemy by abiding in the word and the Spirit and by walking in the authority of God's Kingdom.

God taught us this lesson in the wilderness. We cannot learn this in a classroom or by reading books. We learn by experience. Head knowledge helps but it is through experience we are changed into the image and likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus went before us. He endured the temptations and much more in his earthly life. Consider him who endured. What can we learn from this? How can we apply this to our every day life situations?

Here is a promise from scripture to help us. 1 Corinthians 10:13, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

Christ died for our sins. He was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus will be saved. The man who was crucified with Jesus asked the Lord Jesus to remember him when he came into his kingdom. The Lord Jesus told him that he would be with him that day in paradise. What can I do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.

Luke 4:14-30

The beginning of the ministry of the Lord Jesus was met with complete rejection from his family and hometown.

After the temptations in the wilderness the Lord Jesus returned to the town where he grew up. In Nazareth he went to the synagogue and read from the prophet Isaiah. He quoted a prophecy which was fulfilled that day in the Lord Jesus. He was and is the fulfillment of prophecy.

When he said that he was the fulfillment of bible prophecy they rebelled against him. They listened to the scriptures but they rejected the one who gave us the scriptures. This is still true today. Many people claim God's word and know scriptures but they do not know the Lord Jesus. They have religion but reject the living God standing before them.

What happened to the Lord Jesus happens to every man of God. Every man of God faces rejection and opposition. The rejection of the Lord Jesus was so violent they wanted to throw him off a cliff. The Lord Jesus walked through the midst of them and went his way.

What does this teach us? It is normal for the Christian to be rejected by unbelieving family, friends, relatives, and even entire churches. It is normal for Christians to be cast out and to be rejected by unbelievers. The most violent unbelievers are religious or intellectual unbelievers. Churches are filled with people who happily sit and listen to God's word read and to sermons but their hearts are filled with violence, murder, and unbelief. They worship self. They do not worship the living God. They reject the Lord Jesus Christ. If you stand for the Lord Jesus they will reject you and cast you out.

The Lord Jesus did not fight with them. He left them. He went his way. This is a lesson I am learning. Sometimes we just have to walk away. This is an important lesson for anyone who wants to follow the Lord Jesus with all of their heart. Sometimes we have to walk away from people. It is OK. Some people will never change. They will not listen to the word of God. They are filled with their own opinions and they worship themselves.

Jeremiah 15:19-21, "Therefore thus saith the LORD, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me: and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them. 20 And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brasen wall: and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the LORD. 21 And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible."

Christ died for our sins. He was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of Jesus will be saved.

Luke 4:31-37

The Lord Jesus demonstrated his authority to drive out demons. The Lord Jesus went to Capernaum and taught them on the Sabbath days. The people were amazed because his word was with power. There was a man in the church who had a demon and cried with a loud voice. The Lord Jesus rebuked the demon and drove it out of the man. Everyone was amazed and the word spread all over the country.

I have several thoughts when I read these verses. It stands out to me that a demon possessed man is going to church. Why would a man who is demon possessed be in church? What was he doing there before Jesus exposed him? Ask yourself the question: how many people are coming to church who are not only unbelievers but demon possessed? The next thing I noticed is that this demon possessed man knew exactly who the Lord Jesus Christ was. The devil believes in God. He knows who the Lord Jesus is. Is it possible to get into a religious conversation with someone, assuming they are a Christian, and

the entire time the person be demon possessed? Just because a person is religious does not mean they are a Christian. It might mean they have demons who are lying to you and pretending to be religious.

Again, why is a demon attending a church service? Do you think demons are attending church today? How would you know?

This demon revealed himself by screaming in the middle of a church service. Have you ever been in a church service where someone interrupted the Pastor? Have you ever been in a church where someone started talking loud enough to stop the preacher or interrupt the service?

There is a reason the apostle Paul said that a church service should be conducted decently and in order. When someone is out of order, or disruptive, it might be an indication of demonic activity.

The Lord Jesus has all authority to drive out the devil. He gave authority to Christians to tread upon serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy. Greater is He that is in us than he that is in this world. We have overcome by the blood of the Lamb. Proclaim the gospel. Proclaim the victory of the Lord Jesus Christ. Do not be afraid of the enemy. Submit yourself to God and resist the devil and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)

Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again on the third day. He ascended into heaven and is at the right hand of God the Father. He lives forever making intercession for us. He is able to save to the uttermost those who come to God in the name of Jesus. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus will be saved.

Luke 4:38-44

The Lord Jesus went into the house of Peter's mother-in-law. He healed her of a fever and she immediately got up and served others. We see a pattern when the Lord Jesus touched a person's life. When a person is saved, healed, delivered, and set free they serve others. This is an automatic response to the influence of the Lord Jesus Christ on a person's life. The person who meets the Lord Jesus will desire to devote his life thereafter to serving the Lord Jesus and others.

By this time the reputation of the Lord's healing power spread and many people came to him. He healed them of their diseases and drove out the devils who afflicted them. The devils knew who he was but the Lord stopped them from speaking. This is an indication that we should have nothing to do with evil people, even those who pretend to promote the cause of the gospel. Always avoid allowing evil people to have anything to do with the ministry or proclaiming the gospel. Do not allow them to associate their presence with the work which God gave us to do. We see this in the history of Nehemiah and Ezra as well when they build the city and altar. They would not let unbelievers have any part of the work.

The Lord did not settle down and enjoy the perks of a successful ministry. He was determined to continue forward to share the word of God with other places. He did not allow success to determine his course. He came to seek and save those who were lost. He came to serve and to lay down his life. He did not allow anything to stand in the way of his mission. He came to give his life and lay his life down as a sacrifice to save others.

Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus is saved.

Jesus Called His Disciples – Luke Chapter 5

Luke 5:1-11

The crowd was so great that the Lord Jesus resorted to a boat and preached from the water. The boat belonged to Simon, a fisherman, who confessed that he fished all night and caught nothing. At the word of the Lord Jesus, however, he put down his net and caught more fish than he could haul in. He requested help from his fellow fishermen to haul in the great catch. As a result, Simon knew that God was present in the Lord Jesus and he requested that Jesus would go away. Peter said, "I am a sinful man."

In scripture men who saw God were afraid they would die. Moses, and Samson's father, all thought they would die if they saw God. This was a common idea in the bible and expressed by God also. If a man saw God he could not live in this human body. From this context we understand why Simon reacted this way. However, the Lord Jesus reassured him that he would not die. Indeed, not only would he live but would be used by God to bring eternal life to others through the preaching of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Simon understood who the Lord Jesus was when the Lord Jesus demonstrated his goodness and provision. Many times men come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ because of the goodness of God. Romans 2:4, "*Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*" This was my experience. When I was a young man God showed kindness and mercy towards me and the revelation of God's love in Jesus Christ brought me to my knees in salvation and worship.

Simon could not bring all the fish to the shore by himself. He needed the help of his brothers. Notice how in Paul's letters he included the names of his fellow workers in the gospel. Each one of us has a part in the ministry but cannot succeed alone. Each one needs his brothers and sisters in Christ to work with him and alongside him. We each belong to one another and each serve the Lord Jesus Christ. The problem arises when brothers are suspicious and think their brother is not serving Jesus. We live in a time when the gospel is so commercialized and sold as a product that people no longer recognize when a true man of God needs support. People no longer see the importance of helping one another to bring fish ashore. We live in a cynical generation where people no longer trust one another. Therefore the work suffers. We are only able to bring a few fish to shore if that.

The Lord Jesus told Peter he would no longer be a fisherman but instead fishing for men. Peter would become the great evangelist who on the day of Pentecost proclaimed the gospel and thousands came to faith in Jesus Christ.

Christ died for our sins. He was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of Jesus Christ will be saved.

Luke 5:12-16

The background of leprosy in the Bible can be found in Leviticus 13 and 14. God provided instructions for Israel on how to deal with this problem. There were examples in the Old Testament of people who were infected with this disease and healed by God. Naaman the Syrian and Miriam the sister of Moses were infected with leprosy and healed by God. This disease was seen by people as God's punishment on a person for his sin. It was thought to be incurable except by a miracle from God.

This leper believed the Lord Jesus could heal him. He expressed complete faith in God's ability even though he did not know whether or not the Lord Jesus was willing to heal him. He knew he could. He just did not know if he would. This is the confusion the enemy puts into the minds of those who believe in God. I know he can, but will he? Don't be confused by this. The Lord Jesus demonstrated that he can heal us and he that is willing to heal us as well.

People were forbidden to touch a leper because of the probability of infection spreading. However, the Lord Jesus reached out and touched the man. He was healed instantly. There was never any danger of infection to the Lord Jesus. No disease or death or sin can stand in the way of the Son of God. He destroyed all the works of the devil.

Why did the Lord Jesus tell the man to follow the religious laws and present himself to the priests according to the Jewish laws? The Lord Jesus wanted him to be a testimony to the priests. The Lord Jesus cared about all these people. His compassion extended to the religious Jew as well as the lowly sick folk.

This same account of the leper was also recorded in Matthew and Mark. It was an important event in the life of the Lord Jesus and was recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again on the third day. He ascended into heaven and is even now at the right hand of God making intercession for us. He will return again to receive us unto himself that where he is we may be also. Everyone who calls upon the name of Jesus is saved.

Luke 5:17-26

The friends of a paralytic did all they could to make sure that he received help from the Lord Jesus. What are we doing to bring people to Jesus? What am I doing today to help bring others to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? These men let down the paralytic through the roof of the house. The Lord Jesus pronounced the man's sins were forgiven. In this case we can assume his physical disability was related to sin. The Lord Jesus forgave the man's sins and also healed the man's body. Spiritual and physical healing go hand in hand with the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus does not make a difference between salvation of the soul and salvation of the body. In God's kingdom we have a new body like the Lord Jesus. We will have a resurrected body in God's kingdom.

There were always people who opposed the work of God. Notice it was almost always religious, self righteous people who opposed the work of God. Satan deceived people with false religion in order to inoculate them from having true faith in God. The Lord Jesus knew their thoughts. He forgave sins. He

healed the man. This was evidence that God was in their midst but they were unable to discern the facts before them. The same is true today. God speaks to us today but who is listening? Who can hear the voice of the Lord today?

The closer we get to the kingdom the less we can abide false religious systems. Judgment begins with the house of God. God discerns between the brother of the flesh and the brother of the spirit. Are you an overcomer?

Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus is saved.

Luke 5:27-39

The Lord Jesus called the publican Levi to follow him. This same Levi was Matthew. He immediately left everything and followed the Lord Jesus.

He invited the Lord Jesus to his house and threw a party for him and his friends. These friends were publicans and sinners.

The Lord Jesus sat down with them and no doubt some came to faith in Christ.

However, religious folk criticized the Lord Jesus for visiting with sinners. The Lord Jesus replied that sick people need a doctor. He did not come to call righteous people but sinners to repentance.

They change their strategy and criticize him because he did not fast like John the Baptist. Note that these religious leaders did not believe in John or Jesus. The comparison was sinister on many levels. This was a temptation of the pride of life to cause a division between him and John the Baptist. The Lord Jesus did not fall into their trap. He taught them that there was a time and place for all things. There was a season and a time for fasting but at that time that it was appropriate for him and his disciples to eat with these sinners. He taught them that they tried to contain him in their religious system and that he would never fit into their system of religion. God is too big to fit into the religious boxes men create.

The Lord Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. His goal was to die on the cross so we could be saved from our sins. Christ died for our sins. Jesus said when he was lifted up he would draw all men to himself. Jesus was lifted up on the cross. He was buried. He rose again on the third day.

Romans 8:34, *"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."*

The Normal Christian Life – Luke Chapter 6

Luke 6:1-5

The Lord Jesus and his disciples went through fields and ate produce. This was on a Sabbath day so they were criticized by the religious leaders. The religious leaders said they were breaking the law because they picked up food from a field on the Sabbath day. This might seem ridiculous to us today but it was a serious accusation then. People were stoned to death for breaking the Sabbath. However, the Lord Jesus responded to them with scripture. Notice how the Lord Jesus responded to his accusers with simple truth from the Bible. He reminded them of the account of when David ate the holy priest's bread and was not guilty of breaking the law. He then told them that he was the Lord of the Sabbath.

I believe the Lord Jesus did these things on the Sabbath to provoke the religious people. I believe this was recorded for us because we have a great need to be set free from false religion. The Lord Jesus exposed the hypocrisy and used the scriptures which they were proud of to show them how hardhearted and unmerciful they were. Religious people are the most unmerciful and hardhearted? Why? Because false religion breeds self righteousness. Self righteous people are the most dangerous people you can find. They can kill you and think they are doing God a favor.

People today who preach we are under the Sabbath are no better than these religious leaders who wanted to kill Jesus. This false religion of Sabbath keeping is exactly the kind of thing the Lord Jesus exposed in all of these stories about breaking the Sabbath. Don't be deceived by false religion that teaches we are under the law or should keep the Sabbath. Flee from these false prophets and false religion. It spreads like cancer in the church.

Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again on the third day according the scriptures. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

Luke 6:6-11

The religious leaders looked for any reason to accuse the Lord Jesus of wrongdoing. They definitely felt threatened by him and his ministry. Why? All he did was heal somebody! Why was this such a threat to these religious leaders?

To understand this we need discernment into why men use religion to control people. Most of the time religious leaders are in their positions for provision and protection. They convince themselves that they do what they do for God but in reality they are in it for themselves. It is a way to make a living.

In those days there was an entire religious system which controlled not only people going to synagogue but their entire society and community. Religious leaders had much more influence than just over those who came to church.

The Lord Jesus was a threat to this. He did not walk according to their man made rules and traditions. And he had spiritual authority and power which they could not deny. He healed people right in front of them and everyone else in church. There was no denying his spiritual authority and power. Yet he did not live according to their rules.

They knew if people followed the Lord Jesus that it would destroy their system of religious control. In other words, they were in danger of losing their careers, their positions, and their prestige. Religious men in positions of prestige will fight you tooth and nail and kill you before they allow you to damage their reputation. I've seen this in my life with powerful religious leaders. They are very dangerous people, just like King Saul in the Old Testament.

Even though he knew their thoughts that they would plot to kill him the Lord Jesus still healed the man. He was not stopped by their madness. He was determined to finish the ministry and the goal which he received from the heavenly Father. We must adopt this same determination. No matter what people say about us, no matter how people slander us or belittle us or mock us. We must obey God. We must continue to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. Don't let religious people stop you from obeying God.

Luke 6:12-19

The Lord Jesus prayed all night before he named his disciples. Here is a precedent for the Christian life. Before any great decisions be made spend time in prayer. If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God. The Lord Jesus never lacked wisdom, but still he prayed all night before he named his disciples. He waited upon the will of his heavenly Father. This is our example. Prayer comes first, before the decision, before the action, before going forward. There are times when we need extended seasons of seeking the Lord in prayer. There are moments in our lives when it may require staying up all night and praying to overcome in a particular circumstance or situation. Be willing to seek God with all of your heart. Daniel fasted and prayed for 21 days. Moses was on the mountain for 40 days with God. How long are you willing to wait on the Lord? King Saul was not willing to wait for the prophet and as a result he lost everything in his life. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles. They shall run and not grow weary. They shall walk and not faint.

After he named his apostles then he ministered to a great multitude of people. Scripture says that virtue went out of him. The Lord Jesus did not live for himself, but came to seek and to save those who were lost. The Lord Jesus gave his life to others. This is our example. Do we live for self, or do we live for others? Do we employ the gifts God gave us to help others? May the Lord help us to see the opportunity before us today to serve and to be a blessing to others.

The Lord Jesus died upon Calvary for our sins. He gave his life and died so that we could live forever with him. He was buried in a tomb. On the third day he rose from the dead. He conquered death, hell, and the grave. Because he has overcome we also, who are in him, also overcome. Believe upon the Lord Jesus today and be saved.

Luke 6:20-23

The Lord Jesus said those who are poor, and mourn, and are cast out and called evil for his sake were actually blessed. Why are we blessed? Because we have a great reward in heaven. Those the Lord Jesus blessed were not living their best life now. Their life, instead, was hid with Christ in God. Their life would begin in heaven, not here on this temporary life. In the next verses the Lord Jesus would pronounce woes on those who were living for the here and now. Those who are poor, and hungry, who

mourn, and who are cast out for the Lord's sake are to rejoice and dance for joy. When we rejoice in the midst of our sufferings we are truly blessed by God. Our reward is great in heaven.

Let us not live for the here and now. Instead, let us make up our mind that we are living for heaven. We were taught by the Lord Jesus to store up treasures in heaven and not on earth. Our goal is to live for God's kingdom and not for this cursed world system that we are caught in now. Don't live for the world system. Don't set your heart on riches for they will fly away like a bird with wings. Don't live for yourself. Don't worship your own self or glorify your own self. Instead, glorify God. Give praise to God. Don't praise yourself. Don't pat yourself on your back. Instead, give God glory and honor and praise.

Luke 6:24-26

The Lord Jesus turned the thinking of the world system right side up. He overturned the tables of our natural, worldly thinking.

He pronounced woes on those who were rich. Think about this for a minute. The biggest and most powerful churches in America preach the opposite of what the Lord Jesus plainly taught. The Lord Jesus pronounced woes on the rich. Yet the most powerful Christian churches in America preach the exact opposite of this.

How is this possible? We are truly living in the last days. These are perilous days when men are lovers of their own selves. The Lord Jesus pronounced woe upon those who were living for the current, present temporary life in this body. He said those who are full now will be hungry in the next life. Those who laugh now in the present life will mourn and weep in the life to come. If you were popular and made a great name for yourself and all men spoke well of you? It was because you were a false prophet. You were a false preacher. You were a false teacher. Think about that for a minute and let that sink in. That should put the fear of God in our heart. We should realize that we need to flee from the religious Babylon that is American churches.

Our natural, default mindset is to worship men who make a name for themselves. We praise men who do well for themselves in this world system. We seek to be like them and to follow them. Why? Because the heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. We need the Holy Spirit to expose the idolatry, covetousness, and unbelief which exists in our hearts. We are natural worshipers of self. We need the Holy Spirit to convict us, correct us, and help us to see clearly what we are and who God really is.

May the Lord take these few verses and open the eyes of our spirit so we can understand how holy, awesome, and powerful the Lord Jesus Christ is. May God open our eyes so we will fear the Lord and depart from evil. Let us humble our hearts, and repent, and ask the Lord to grant us grace so we can walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh.

Luke 6:27-36

Here was the way of the Christian life in relationships with other believers and with unbelievers. We should not retaliate or seek revenge against people who sin against us. Instead, we love people, pray for

them, and bless them. Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil by doing good. The Lord takes care of people who hurt us, or harm us, or steal from us, or take advantage of us. Leave that to the Lord. Do not worry about your life. Be prepared to lay your life down and love people even those who hate you. You will find people hate you simply because you are a Christian. Don't be surprised by this. Don't be surprised when people speak evil of you simply because you are a Christian. Love your enemies. Do good to them. Pray for them. Ask God to bless them with the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Sooner or later you will have people take advantage of you because you are a Christian. This might be money, or your time, or your life in some way. Don't begrudge people when they take your time, or resources, and never pay you back. Trust in God with your life and resources. Don't hold on to your life or resources but let it all go. God will take care of you.

The ability to love your enemies is supernatural. The strength to love people like this can only come from God. This is not human or natural love. Human and natural love runs out of energy quickly. God's love, however, endures forever. God puts his love in our heart by the Holy Spirit. Romans 5:5, "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

This scripture reminds me of the testimony of Corrie ten Boom. Her family was killed during World War 2 but after the war she preached the gospel to the people who killed her family. She had a guard in the concentration camp where her sister was killed who attended one of her meetings and he became a Christian. Corrie did not have the human strength to love this man but when she reached out her hand by faith she was filled with the Holy Spirit and enabled by God to love the one who participated in destroying her family. This love comes from God. This is the love of Jesus Christ which he makes available to us if we receive it by faith. By faith we love our enemies. By faith we pray for those who take advantage of us.

Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus will be saved.

Luke 6:37-42

When I read this it reminds me of how the Lord Jesus reproved the spiritual blindness of the religious leaders and told his disciples to avoid them. He said they were blind leaders of the blind and both would fall into a ditch. When I read this it helps me to discern the religious spirit which controls people. What is this religious spirit like? It judges others but is unable to see that it does the same thing that it condemns in other people. It condemns others and cannot see that God condemns it for the same things it condemns other people for. This religious attitude causes people to be blind to their own condition. Instead, it brings pride which blinds a man to his own moral and spiritual condition. It can easily see the faults and failures in other people but is incapable of seeing the same faults and failures in its own life.

I believe the Lord wants us to help our brother with the mote in his eye. However, we cannot help someone if we have the same problem in our life. I think people desire to preach, counsel, or help others but they are not free in their own life. They are bound up with sin, unbelief, idolatry, covetousness, immorality, and yet they want to help other people. This is religion. It is hypocrisy. We must be completely free and filled with life before we can free someone else and impart spiritual life.

We must be completely free in Christ. God places us in Christ. He unites us together with him in crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection. It is only by abiding in the gospel that we are set free and it is only when we walk in victory we can help other people see the truth and be set free as well. This requires dying to self and allowing the Holy Spirit to live through you. When you do this you are not focusing on judging or condemning others. Instead, you discern the problem and come alongside the brother with love and compassion to help him be set free.

Praise the Lord for setting us free from self, from sin, from the world, and from the devil. Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus will be saved.

Luke 6:43-45

In the last section the Lord Jesus warned us about judging people. However, in this section we are called to use discernment in dealing with people. There is a negative type of judging that we are to avoid. That kind of judging is tied together with a blindness of one's own sin and faults. However, the discernment described in these verses is completely necessary if we are ever to help others and help ourselves avoid people who would corrupt us.

The Lord Jesus taught us with the analogy of trees and their fruit. A tree brings forth a specific kind of fruit. A bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree bears good fruit. If you hear bad things coming out of a person's mouth consistently then you know the heart of that person is bad. If you constantly hear good things coming out of a person's mouth you know that person is good.

Even in this, however, you need to discern between things that are "carnal" good things, and what is "spiritual" good. Many people nowadays are into positive confession, but they have no grasp of the truth of the bible at all. They may say positive words but the spirit and heart behind what they say is covetousness and self worship. It takes the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to discern these things. This is why we can NOT rely upon our natural understanding of people to know what is good and bad. We must rely upon the Holy Spirit to show us the kind of fruit a person has.

Churches are filled with crowds of people. Look at mega churches. Would you say they are bearing good fruit or bad fruit? How do you discern what is good fruit? Is great numbers of people an indication of good fruit? Many times it is not. There were many people who followed King Saul and died with him. Was King Saul good because many people followed him?

When you hear the gospel of Jesus Christ coming out of people consistently you can know they are good. The gospel is this. Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Preach to men and tell them they are great sinners, and Jesus Christ is a great Savior. We are wrong in every way. But Jesus is right in all of his ways.

Luke 6:46-49

Our life is compared to building a house. What kind of foundation did you build on? If the Lord Jesus Christ is the foundation of your life then you have a sure foundation. When you stand before the Lord on judgment day this foundation will stand and your spirit will be saved.

The apostle Paul seemed to build on this analogy in 1 Corinthians 3 when he talked about building upon the foundation. With what material did you use to build with? Do we build on the foundation of the Lord Jesus with obedience to him? Do we walk in the Spirit and produce the fruits of the Spirit? Or do we profess our faith in Christ and yet continue to walk in the flesh like the rest of the world?

It is possible for a man to be a Christian and to walk in the flesh. He will lose his reward and inheritance if he does. We must learn to build on the solid foundation of obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. We must learn to put his word into practice in our every day lives. This is only possible by the power of the Holy Spirit. We must yield ourselves to the Lord by abiding in the gospel, by staying in his word, by staying in prayer. Then we will have the spiritual strength to obey him and to walk in his word. Then we will build a life which will stand up against the fires of judgment at the judgment seat of Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:11-15, *"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."*

2 Corinthians 5:8-11, *"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences."*

Christ Jesus died for us upon the cross of Calvary. He gave his life as a ransom, a substitute, for us. If we will believe and receive we will escape the wrath of God. If you do not believe you will face the full wrath of God's fist of judgment one day. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ will be saved.

Power Over Death – Luke Chapter 7

Luke 7:1-10

The Lord Jesus commended the faith of the Centurion. He also commended the faith of a Gentile woman who had faith in him. These were people outside the house of Israel but knew that the Lord Jesus was the Messiah and could heal them of their problems.

In this case the Centurion had a servant who was sick and about to die. The Centurion sent his request through the Jewish leaders. These Jews wanted to help him because he loved the Jewish nation and built a synagogue. Notice this man's faith in the God of Israel was expressed through a practical demonstration of good works. As a result, the Jews reasoned with the Lord Jesus that this man was "worthy" of his help. This is an interesting insight because it showed the importance of living our faith in front of others and not just talking about faith.

After he sent the Jews to intercede with the Lord Jesus he then sent friends to stop Jesus from coming to his house. In the first case he sent the Jews to bring the Lord Jesus to him. Then it seems he changed his mind and sent friends to tell the Lord Jesus not to come to his house but rather speak a word and his servant would be healed. This showed the progress of receiving revelation. He knew the Lord Jesus could help him. Then he realized what he needed was the word of the Lord and his problem would be solved.

This is the place I believe the Lord is bringing me to. God wants me to walk by faith in his word. He wants me to stand upon his word, his promises, and claim his word as my own. He wants me to believe in his word and experience God's power in my life to heal me, set me free, to bring joy instead of mourning, and to bring victory. I believe we can be overcomers today in Christ Jesus. I believe God is calling me and others to take our stand upon his word and proclaim the victory we have in the Lord Jesus Christ. Satan and all his devils are defeated. Sin is no longer my master. I belong to the Lord Jesus Christ now. My life is in the hands of my Creator the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ died for our sins. He was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Call upon the name of the Lord Jesus and be saved from self, sin, the world, the devil, and from a lake of fire.

Luke 7:11-17

The Lord Jesus demonstrated he had power over death. He raised the dead son of this widow from the village of Nain. He met the funeral procession as it left town and caused them to stop in their tracks. He spoke to the dead man and he sat up and was alive. No doubt the people who saw this were thunderstruck with terror at the power of God demonstrated at the word of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus gave the young man back to his mother and thus restored hope in this present life to her and also to him.

How many people did the Lord Jesus raise from the dead? There was Jairus' daughter, and Lazarus who was the brother of Mary and Martha. The Lord Jesus demonstrated on several occasions his power of life over death. The Lord Jesus said he was the resurrection and life. Anyone who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ received eternal life.

The Lord Jesus destroyed the power of death. He rose from the dead on the third day and demonstrated that he had all power and authority in heaven and on earth and under the earth. Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

You can have eternal life today. Call upon the name of Jesus and ask him to raise you up from the dead and give you new life. 2 Corinthians 5:17, *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."*

Luke 7:18-35

John the Baptist had a full revelation of who Jesus Christ was. John was there when the Lord Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River and the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus in the form of a dove. John the Baptist was there when a voice from heaven said that Jesus was his Son. John saw this, he heard it, he believed it. He confessed that Jesus Christ was the Lamb of God. So what was happening when John sent messengers to Jesus to ask him if he was the one or should he wait for someone else?

This showed the humanity of John the Baptist. This showed us that when we suffer like this our faith can be shaken. The enemy can attack us and attempt to take away our faith in the Lord Jesus. However, the Lord was gracious and sent a word back to John to encourage his faith. Look at the evidence. See what Christ has done. See what he did in the Bible. See what he did in your life in the past. Don't forget what God already revealed to you. It is easy to forget. It is easy to let go of what you know is true, especially during times of intense suffering. This should be a warning to us that we need to hold steadfastly to everything the Lord spoke to us. Hold on to everything God revealed to you through his word. Do not forget and do not let go of God's word to you.

The Lord Jesus sent a word of encouragement to John. Then he spoke to the crowd around him. Those who already humbled themselves and were baptized by John gladly heard the word of the Lord Jesus. Those who did not humble their hearts or confess their sins would not hear the word of the Lord Jesus. The Lord ended this exhortation when he said that no matter how a messenger of truth presented himself to the world that the world would always reject the truth. John came in one manner and Jesus in another manner. But it did not matter how they spoke or presented themselves. They both spoke the truth and both were rejected by those who refused to humble themselves.

Sometimes the prophet of the Lord would be rebuked by the world. They accuse him of being unloving or too hard on people. They would criticize the man of God's methods! But this was just their way of rejecting the truth of what the prophet spoke. He spoke the truth but they rejected his words when they said that they don't like the way he spoke. They were only deceiving their themselves when they did this. They were not deceiving the Lord. The Lord knew their hearts and he saw the pride in them.

Luke 7:36-50

The forgiveness of her sins was evident because of the love she showed towards the Lord Jesus. Someone who experiences the forgiveness of their sins will love the Lord Jesus with all their heart. This is an automatic response to the grace of God and the forgiveness of sins. This woman had something which Simon the Pharisee did not have. Her sins were forgiven. Her faith made her whole in Christ Jesus.

The Lord Jesus knew the thoughts of these religious men. Even before they said anything he knew what they were thinking. The Lord knows our thoughts. He can see what we are thinking and knows what is in our heart even before we ourselves know.

The Lord Jesus forgives our sins. When we receive the Lord our heart overflows with thanksgiving and love and worship. She worshiped the Lord Jesus. This is the desire and the response of every soul who

has been in the presence of the Lord Jesus. You cannot touch him and not love him. When he heals you, and forgives you, you will love him forever. He is worthy of all the glory, all the honor, and all the praise.

Raised From The Dead – Luke Chapter 8

Luke 8:1-3

Here was an example of when women were included in the ministry of the Lord Jesus. From the beginning the Lord Jesus included men and women in the work of the gospel. The apostle Paul later expounded on this in his letters and it would benefit churches, men, and women greatly to study what Paul says to men, women, and the role we each take in family, work, and in the church. These women accompanied the Lord Jesus and ministered to him out of their resources. However, all of the twelve apostles of the Lord were men. There were different roles. How difficult it would be for those apostles if the women were not there performing their role. The apostles were not better than these women. It was the women the Lord Jesus first appeared to after his resurrection. The Lord honored women many times in the Bible. There were women mentioned in his genealogy. Here were women, mentioned by name, recorded in the gospel account. There was a woman named Mary who anointed the Lord Jesus for his burial and he said her story would always be told anywhere the gospel was proclaimed. My point is this: those in the world who say that Christianity is against women are wrong. Christianity is the greatest thing that ever happened for women. It is the Lord who showed the world the value and the beauty and the importance of women.

We all have different roles as men and women. We are different. God created us different. There are men, and there are women, and we are separate, different, and important in each of our own roles.

Christ died for our sins. He was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

Luke 8:4-15

It is true that not everyone will benefit from hearing the word of God. The Lord Jesus taught in his parable that people hear the word according to what was already in their heart. In order to hear God's word in such a way that brings fruit our heart must be prepared. We should pray and ask the Lord to give us a heart that can hear his word and can receive and keep the word and that can then produce fruit in our life. The goal of God's word in us is to bear fruit through us to benefit others. God's word is like a seed planted in the ground. The purpose of that seed is to be planted, to die in the earth, and then to resurrect with life in order to bring forth life for others. This is what we see in the life of Jesus. He gave himself upon Calvary so through his death and resurrection we can receive eternal life by faith in him.

Not everyone who heard the Lord speak could understand what he said. Some heard the Lord with joy but lost the word because the enemy came and stole it away. Others heard and received but produced nothing because of hardship and suffering. Others did not benefit because they were distracted by the world system. The cares of life choked the word. Others heard God's word in a good heart and

produced fruit. There was a one in four chance of bearing fruit when hearing the word. It took a humble and obedient heart to benefit from hearing the word.

I think one purpose in telling parables was to actually protect people from being accountable for knowing things they would never believe. The more a person understands about the Bible the more accountable they become. I pray that what I learn from God I will obey and put into practice. I pray I can bear the fruit which God looks for in the life he gave me.

Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of Jesus will be saved.

Luke 8:16-18

The Lord wants us to share with others what he gave us. We should share our testimony of how the Lord Jesus Christ saved us. Along with that testimony be careful to share the scriptures which show other people how they can be saved. I always share 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 and also Romans 10:9-13 with people. These are basic scriptures which outline the gospel and how to be saved.

The gospel in our hearts is a bright shining light. However, if we never open our mouth and share the word with others then we are hiding the light. At some point we need to be bold and share the Lord Jesus with other people. We need to let other people know we are Christians, we love the Lord, and let other people know how they can be saved. Without the word of God there is no way a person can move from darkness into the light.

I had people when I was a young man who were faithful to share God's word with me. I had my mom, a teacher in high school, and several people I worked with in different jobs who were faithful to the Lord and shared the gospel with me.

I'm thankful for the years I had when I was a young Christian to share my testimony with people. I had the chance to share my testimony with churches, schools, in jails, in prisons, and on the streets. Those were glorious days for me. I let my light shine day after day.

We go through different seasons in life when we are more active letting our light shine. My hope and my prayer is that I may inspire you today to let your light shine for Jesus. Let us make the best use of the opportunity we have to witness, share God's word, and proclaim the good news that Jesus saves!

Luke 8:19-21

This was also recorded in Matthew 12:46-50 and Mark 3:31-35. The fact that this specific incident was repeated three times in the gospels show there was an important truth here. What was important in this? The natural family of the Lord Jesus was contrasted with the spiritual family of those who hear and obey God.

The most painful lesson in my life took place in the context of family. Most of the people in my family do not know the Lord Jesus. Over an extended period of time of many years I shared scripture, the

gospel, and my testimony with each one of them. I did this as the occasion arose and also in a systematic fashion.

As I've gotten older I realize the best thing I can do is pray for them. I see our roads are slowly but surely separating from one another. A spiritual reality is taking shape in front of my eyes. I can only explain this by putting it into the form of a metaphor. It is like walking down a road. When you are young you walk on the road with people in your family. However, when you are born into the family of God you start walking a different road than people in your natural family. Someone who is truly born again will have an intense desire to bring his natural family into this spiritual road. I remember this was an intense longing for me when I was young. I spent long periods of prayer when I cried and wept and prayed for my family.

Over decades I've seen the hardness of unbelief confirm them in the concrete of self worship and turning their back on the living God. It truly gives me pain. I cannot bear to continue to keep up some kind of pretend relationship with them. They refuse to relate to you on the basis of truth and think you hate them because they can't understand why you cannot agree to relate to them on the basis of their delusions and deceit.

The Lord Jesus never gave in to this. He refused to relate to his family on the basis of their opinions or thoughts or feelings. His relationship with everyone was based on truth. If anyone rejected the truth he could not reach them. He is the Truth. When Jesus lives in your heart the truth lives in you. You can no longer walk on the same road as those who do not believe in the Bible. It is impossible. It is not because you don't want to or because you hate your family. It is because there is a literal, spiritual wall that is growing thicker and taller and wider and it cannot be crossed.

How can two walk together unless they be agreed?

Luke 8:22-25

The Lord Jesus demonstrated his authority over the raging seas. The Lord Jesus is King over all creation. Jesus Christ is God. He is the Savior, and he is the Lord, and he is the King. He demonstrated his authority and power over creation.

Notice the Lord Jesus told his disciples they would go to the other side of the lake. If they listened to him then they would not have thought that they would perish. They would have known that no matter what the circumstances appear that they would make it to the other side. Some people teach that the Lord Jesus rebuked them for a lack of faith because he expected them to rebuke the seas. I don't believe that. Instead, I think he rebuked them for not remembering what he said. He said they were going to the other side. The Lord Jesus was the one who rebuked the sea. They did right going to him for help but their attitude of fear had to be corrected. We should go to God in our difficult situations in life, but go to God with faith. Go to the Lord like the shunammite woman, and say, "All is well."

God is in control of the raging seas. He reigns as King over the flood. He reigns as King forever.

Luke 8:26-39

After crossing the sea the Lord Jesus and his disciples landed where they met a man who was possessed by a legion of demons. The Lord Jesus demonstrated his authority over the powers of darkness by driving out this legion of demons. The demons went into a herd of pigs and drowned in the sea. The man was thankful and wanted to follow the Lord Jesus but the Lord told him to go home and tell his family how God had mercy on him.

What always stands out to me in this account is how Jesus exposes the system which the powers of darkness use. Jesus demanded to know their name. They said "Legion" because there were great numbers of them. Through this we understand the system the powers of darkness use is based on making a name for themselves and bringing numbers underneath a name they create. This is also seen in the account of the tower of Babel and is also exposed by the Lord Jesus when he said the Antichrist would come "in his own name". This is the basis for how the world system operates. Men exalt their names and bring numbers of men under their name to create satanic power. This satanic power provides them with provision and protection and portion independently from God. The world system is a counterfeit of the attributes of God.

I look forward to the day when the Lord Jesus will drive out every demon off this earth. One day all of the powers of darkness in the air will be driven out and the atmosphere will be completely cleansed from their influence. I look forward to God's Kingdom coming on this earth. I look forward to God's will being done on earth as it is in heaven.

Luke 8:40-56

The Lord Jesus and his disciples returned from across the sea. They were welcomed back and the Lord Jesus was approached by Jairus, the ruler of a synagogue. He asked the Lord Jesus to save his daughter because she was dying. On the way to help Jairus the Lord Jesus encountered a woman who touched the hem of his robe and was healed from a bleeding disease. She was healed immediately. At first the Lord Jesus didn't know exactly who touched him but she came forward and made a full confession. The Lord Jesus said her faith made her whole and to go in peace. He continued on with Jairus and raised the little girl from the dead. The Lord Jesus insisted that she was sleeping and was not dead, but he also said this about Lazarus who was clearly dead. When Jesus spoke to the little girl her spirit returned so it was clear she was dead, even though Jesus said she slept. The early church used this same way of describing physical death as "sleeping". The Lord Jesus raised the little girl from the dead and gave her back to her parents. The Lord requested that they keep this incident quiet and not talk about it.

The main idea I get from this passage is that Jesus has authority over life and death. He is the giver of all life. The Lord Jesus said he is the resurrection and the life. There are several examples in the gospels where the Lord Jesus raised someone from the dead. This girl was one example. Lazarus was an example. There was also a young man from Nain whom the Lord raised from the dead. Probably there were other examples that occurred where the Lord Jesus raised people from the dead. In my opinion, I think the Lord still raises some people from the dead. There are a lot of testimonies you can listen to online where people died, had an encounter with the Lord, and then returned to life to tell others about heaven, or hell, or a message from the Lord.

The entire Christian faith rests upon the fact of the resurrection from the dead. Read 1 Corinthians 15. Paul made it clear that our faith rested upon the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. If people cannot be raised from the dead, or if there was no after life, then there is no Christian faith. But, hallelujah, Jesus Christ is risen from the dead. There is plenty of evidence in the Bible for this, and there is historical evidence that a person can research if they are interested.

Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Call upon the name of the Lord Jesus and be saved today.

Sent Out By The Lord – Luke Chapter 9

Luke 9:1-6

The Lord Jesus sent out his twelve apostles to preach, proclaim, drive out devils, and heal sick people. He gave them specific instructions on what equipment to use, where to stay, and how to respond to people who rejected their ministry. The Lord did not leave out any details when he instructed his apostles in their ministry.

My take here is that I need to be ready to receive specific instructions from the Lord on how to conduct myself, on how to serve in ministry, and how to live for him. He is my provider, my protection, and my portion forever. Therefore I should listen to his instructions even when it comes to such mundane things as equipment used in ministry and how to conduct myself in ministry.

This principle holds for the faith of the Christian. We should live in accordance with God's instructions to us through the Holy Bible. We are to carefully read the instructions in the New Testament on how we should live and then conform our lives to those instructions.

The following passages provide some straight forward instructions on Christian living: Romans 12-15, Galatians 5:16-26, Ephesians 4:17-6:9, Philippians 4:4-9, Colossians 3-4, 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-22, 2 Thessalonian 3:6-15, Titus 2-3, James (the entire book). These are just samples. There is a lot more in the New Testament, including the teachings of the Lord Jesus in the gospel accounts.

Luke 9:7-9

Herod killed John the Baptist. He heard rumors about the Lord Jesus and was told this might be John the Baptist risen from the dead, or it might be Elijah come back from heaven, or it might be one of the other prophets. Notice how people in those days believed the same kind of things people do today. They believed people could rise from the dead. This was seen clearly in the ministry of the Lord Jesus because he raised people from the dead. The widow's son from Nain, Jairus' daughter, and Lazarus were just three examples I can think of.

Herod was perplexed. This is how the world feels about Christians. They are perplexed. This explains the anger, the mocking, the minimizing and unbelief. You can't really put a Christian into a box, but unbelievers do this non-stop. They can't be happy until they have labeled and categorized a Christian.

Why? Because Christians perplex them. It causes unbelievers mental anguish to think about Christians. Almost always the world reacts to Christians with a negative response. Rarely do you find someone who does not believe in God who has something positive to say about Christians. When you do, it is because they are trying to pretend they are magnanimous in order to feel good about themselves.

Herod was perplexed. I've suffered for a long time with the confusion of other people around me. Unbelievers just do not know what to do with a real Christian. They can feel the spiritual life in the Christian. They can smell the fragrance of the Lord in the Holy Spirit filled Christian. It is not an aroma they like very much. It reminds them that they are going to die. It reminds them they will give an account for all of their sins. It reminds them they have appointment with God to keep.

Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus will be saved.

Luke 9:10-17

When the apostles returned to the Lord Jesus after their missionary journey he brought them aside privately to a desert place near Bethsaida. However, the general population heard of his location and came out to him. He taught them about the kingdom of God and he healed people. Eventually the disciples came to the Lord Jesus and asked him to send the crowds away so they could get food and shelter. The Lord Jesus turned this around and told the disciples to give the crowd food. They protested and said they only had five loaves and two fishes. The Lord Jesus told the disciples to make the people sit down in groups of fifty. Once this was done the Lord Jesus took the bread and fish, blessed it, and with it he fed all of those five thousand people, and there were twelve baskets of food left over which the disciples collected.

There are multiple thoughts and lessons which we can glean from this account of the Lord Jesus feeding the five thousand people. One thought I have, first of all, is a simple fact: God is my Provider. The Lord Jesus is my Provider. Psalm 23:1, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want".

The Lord Jesus taught his disciples to pray to the Father and say, "Give us this day our daily bread." God is our provider. He gives us everything we need in order to live on this earth. The Lord Jesus taught his disciples to seek first God's kingdom and his righteousness and all these other things (material things we need for life) would be added to us.

Another thought I have is that those who were in the ministry serving the Lord Jesus did not really have much compassion for the people. They wanted them to go away. Perhaps this lack of compassion arises from a lack of faith. They did not see the five loaves and two fish as enough food to feed the multitude of people. However, in the hands of the Lord Jesus, that little bit of food became enough to feed that entire multitude of people. When we give the Lord Jesus what we have then he can take it and multiply it and feed many people. Don't ever feel like you don't have anything to offer the Lord or other people. Sometimes just a word of encouragement or comfort can make all the difference.

This account described a miracle of God's provision. Do you need a miracle today? Do you need God to provide a need in your life? Ask the Lord Jesus and see what he will do for you.

Luke 9:18-27

The Lord Jesus asked his disciples who the people said he was. His disciples replied that some thought he was John the Baptist, or that he was one of the prophets of old returned. The Lord Jesus then asked them who they thought he was. Peter replied that the Lord Jesus was the Christ. When he made this confession the Lord Jesus instructed his disciples not to tell anyone. He then predicted he would be handed over to die and that he would rise again on the third day. He taught his disciples to take up their cross and follow him. He taught them if they wanted to gain life then they should lose their life for his sake. He taught them if anyone was ashamed of him and his words he would be ashamed of them before the heavenly Father and the angels. He concluded by saying that some of the disciples present would see him coming in his kingdom.

A man has a choice to worship the Lord or to worship himself. If he worships the Lord then he must deny himself and take up his cross. The Lord Jesus showed us the way to live for God. It is by giving away our life for God. In the Lord's case this literally meant that he would die on the cross. For us, many times this means we live for the Lord Jesus instead of living for ourselves. In the same way that Abraham offered Isaac to God we are to offer our heart and lives to God. We should be willing to go all the way with God and die if that is the will of God. As far as Abraham was concerned Isaac was dead but God raised him from the dead in a figure. He stopped him from offering his son and instead God offered his only begotten Son Jesus Christ in our place. God provided himself as the Lamb.

The impact of this upon us was to set us free from living for ourselves. If we only live for self then in the end we will lose everything. We will be castaway. Look at that word "castaway" here.

Luke 9:25, *"For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?"*

Men who do not follow the Lord Jesus dedicate their entire lives to gaining the world. They live their entire life according to the principles of the world system, hoping for provision, hoping for protection, hoping for prestige and glory. But what do they get? In the end they lose their life. When they stand before God they will have nothing but vanity to show for themselves.

The only way to live is to die to self and instead live for the Lord Jesus Christ. Follow the example of the Lord Jesus Christ. Humble yourself and be obedient to death even the death of the cross.

Luke 9:28-36

This account of the transfiguration of the Lord Jesus was recorded in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. This was a significant event in the life of the Lord Jesus. Peter later mentioned this again in his epistle. This was a life changing experience for the disciples. The Lord Jesus took Peter, James, and John with him up on the mountain to pray. While he was there he was changed. His face was changed and he glowed with a heavenly white light. While he was there two men appeared in glory with the Lord Jesus. These men were Moses and Elijah. In my opinion, these two men were the same ones there when the Lord Jesus ascended into heaven, and will be the two witnesses in the book of Revelation. I also think they might have been the two men at the tomb of the Lord Jesus when he was resurrected.

Peter suggested the creation of three tents, one for the Lord Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. Somehow he knew who these men were without having met them previously. This gives us a clue as to how things will be in the kingdom of God. We will know each other. We will know the Lord and we will know one another. A cloud appeared and the voice of God the Father spoke, proclaiming that the Lord Jesus was God's beloved Son and to hear him. Listen to the Lord Jesus! Listen to the Lord Jesus! This is what we are called to do. We are called to hear the voice of the Lord. This was the advantage of someone like Mary over her sister Martha. She had the spiritual discernment to know what was the most important thing to do. May God give us the discernment to know what is the best thing we can do with the life we have been given. Listen to the Lord Jesus.

Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus will be saved.

Luke 9:37-45

When the Lord Jesus and his disciples came down from the mountain of transfiguration they were confronted with a father who had a son possessed by devils. This father had already asked the Lord's disciples to help him and they were unable to cast out the devils from this boy.

I'm not sure who the Lord Jesus was rebuking when he said "faithless and perverse generation" but I assume this was directed at the disciples who were unable to help the man.

Even in the presence of the Lord these devils tried to act up but the Lord Jesus rebuked them, cast them out, and healed the boy completely. He then gave the boy back to his father. Everyone there was amazed at the mighty power of God displayed through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Right at that moment the Lord Jesus turned to his disciples and told them that the Son of Man would be delivered into the hands of men. Why did he say this? I think he tried to wake them up to get serious about their spiritual walk. He would only be with them a short season of time. He had a mission to go to Calvary and had only a short time to teach them.

He rebuked them to make them humble themselves and get serious about their spiritual life. The Lord Jesus rebuked the churches in Revelation chapters 2 and 3 in a similar manner. He said that everyone he loved he chastened and rebuked. We are to be zealous for the Lord and repent.

It is possible for a Christian to go a long time without any spiritual power in his life. Instead of living in spiritual defeat the Lord Jesus called us to get rid of all compromise in our life. He wants us to have a red hot burning faith in God and to get rid of all compromise. We may need to fast and pray to build this spiritual fire in our life. In another places where this same story was retold the Lord Jesus told his disciples that some demons can only come out by prayer and fasting.

Rid your life of all compromise. Remember to lay aside every weight and every sin which so easily besets you. Do not be like Israel at the foot of the mountain waiting for Moses to come back. Do not give in to the flesh but instead walk in the Spirit as you wait each day upon the Lord. Do not give in to impatience. Do not allow yourselves to give in to discouragement or unbelief. He that will come will come and will not delay. Cast not away your confidence today. Endure until the end.

Luke 9:46-50

The natural man compares himself with his peers to see if he is better than others. This is natural human nature. Comparison leads to pride or envy. It leads to strife and division. In God's kingdom there is no strife, or envy, or division. How is this accomplished? The one who is least of all is the greatest. The weak, the base, and those who are nobody are chosen by God.

1 Corinthians 1:26-29, *"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence."*

The natural human desire of wanting to be great caused people to want to exclude others. Whereas the Lord Jesus says "come unto me" it was the attitude of natural man to say "go away" and to exclude people. This is what we see happening in the next verses where the disciples tried to stop someone else from participating in ministry work because they were not part of their group of disciples. This attitude is still with us today. It is why, in my opinion, so many people leave the church and never come back. They find no place where they can participate and express the gifts which God gave them.

We need a radical change in our church culture. We need to see things from the perspective of God's kingdom. Those who are least among us are the greatest. We should not seek to exalt the names of men. We should not seek to elevate men with titles and positions. Instead, we should all pull up a chair in a circle and seek to edify and exhort and comfort one another as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Luke 9:51-56

The Lord Jesus rebuked his disciples for asking if they should call down fire from heaven and destroy a village. The Lord Jesus told them that he did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them. The Lord Jesus saves lives. They did not understand his mission at all. This showed that his own disciples who were with him for those three years of ministry did not really perceive his true mission and goal.

The Samaritans resisted the direction which the Lord Jesus headed. They put up a roadblock. His disciples did not understand his mission and they offered alternatives which were contrary to his purpose. However, the Lord Jesus continued to go forward in obedience to his heavenly Father.

Underline the phrase "when the time was come that he should be received up". What does this mean? A simple application here is that there is a season for everything in our lives. In the life of the Lord Jesus he had one short season to accomplish all God wanted to accomplish through him. He did God's will. His mission was to save lives. This is still his mission today, and it is the mission of the church as well. We are the hands and feet and mouth of the Lord Jesus on this earth. We are to preach the gospel so that men can be saved.

Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus will be saved.

Luke 9:57-62

The Lord Jesus talked to three different people about discipleship. He was approached by two people and one person he approached.

In the first case a man offered to follow the Lord, but the Lord told him that he lived like a homeless man. Does the man still want to follow? The Lord challenges us to consider how he lived and count the cost. Are we willing to suffer like he did in order to be his disciple?

In the second case the Lord Jesus exhorted someone to follow him. But the person made an excuse related to family obligations. The Lord Jesus told him to let the dead bury the dead but for him to go and preach the kingdom of God. Interesting how the Lord called people "dead" in this verse. I think this is echoed later in Paul's letter when he said that we were dead in our trespasses and sins. In other words, unbelievers in this world system have their place and their job. Let them do what they do. But our goal and purpose is to obey the Lord and preach the gospel.

In the third case another person volunteered to follow the Lord Jesus but with certain conditions. He also wanted to fulfill some kind of family issue. The Lord Jesus told him that no man who put his hand to the plough and looked back was fit for the kingdom of God. In this case we see that to serve the Lord we must be whole hearted and not look back. Remember Lot's wife. She looked back and lost out.

We should seriously consider each one of these conversations and ask ourselves if this applies to us. Are we making excuses for not following the Lord with our whole heart? Are we truly living as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Examine yourselves to see if you are really in the faith or not.

Pray To The Lord Of The Harvest – Luke Chapter 10

Luke 10:1-11

The Lord appointed seventy disciples and sent them out two by two to cities he would soon visit. He gave them specific instructions on how to travel, how to act, and how to conduct the work of the ministry. It began with prayer. The Lord Jesus said for them to pray to the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth laborers into his harvest.

This is a verse I've tried for years to remember to include in my daily prayers to the Lord. Lord, I pray that you would send forth laborers into the harvest to seek and to save those who are lost. It is a good thing to remember in prayer and it is a good thing to remember in our life as a Christian. When we pray this it will also remind us that we are his ambassadors. We are sent forth by the Lord to our families, workplace, churches, and the community we live in to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth.

The Lord Jesus taught the disciples to serve others and accept help from people. His disciples lived and ate and slept where people made them welcome. If a city did not listen to their message they gave an

anti-testimony to that city. In the next section we see how the Lord Jesus pronounced woe upon cities which rejected the message of the gospel.

Their message was this: the kingdom of God is near.

The same is true today. God's kingdom is near. We should live in view of the return of the Lord Jesus and the establishment of his kingdom over all the nations of the earth.

Luke 10:12-16

The Lord Jesus pronounced woe upon cities where the disciples preached and taught the word. Why did he pronounce woes? Because they heard him preaching. The Son of God preached in their cities. The Lord Jesus was not just another prophet or teacher. He was and is the Son of God and God the Son. He was not just another religious teacher visiting their cities. As a result, when they rejected him and did not listen to him they earned a much more severe punishment. The more light we have the more accountable we become to God.

Think of the light which Moses had. As a result of the light which he had from God he was much more accountable. All it took was one time disobeying God's command and Moses lost his chance to enter the promised land. Think about that.

We have greater light in the New Testament. We have the words of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Pray and ask the Lord to help you to hear, receive, believe, and obey the Lord. Be filled with the Holy Spirit. Walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh.

Luke 10:17-24

The disciples returned from their missions trip and reported in with the Lord Jesus about all they did on their mission. They were excited because they had experienced the authority and power of the Lord Jesus to drive out devils. The Lord Jesus said he saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Then he told his disciples that they had power to tread upon serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy and that nothing would hurt them. This reference to serpents and scorpions reminds me of another verse in the Bible.

Deuteronomy 8:15, *"Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint;"*

Perhaps the Lord was referring back to this passage. The application of this, however, no doubt points to the authority of the believer in the Lord Jesus over the powers of darkness. We have authority in the name of Jesus Christ to drive out the devil. As scripture says in James 4:7, *"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."*

We do not need to fear the enemy. The enemy was defeated by the Lord Jesus Christ at Calvary. The Lord Jesus was crucified, he died, and he was buried. On the third day he rose from the dead and

defeated all the powers of death, hell, and the grave. The power of Satan was broken by the Lord Jesus Christ. We are no longer slaves to sin but are now slaves of righteousness unto holiness with the result of everlasting life in Jesus.

The Lord Jesus told them not to rejoice in this power over demons but rather rejoice because their names were written down in heaven.

Let us rejoice today in our salvation. We have been cleansed by the blood of the Lamb. We have been purchased and redeemed by the Lord Jesus Christ through his finished and completed work.

Luke 10:25-37

A certain lawyer asked the Lord Jesus how he could inherit eternal life. The Lord Jesus pointed him to the law of God. The man replied correctly. Love God and love your neighbor. The Lord Jesus confirmed that if he did this he would have eternal life.

For some reason the man wanted to justify himself. He wanted to defend himself. Why? Perhaps he was under conviction. Perhaps his conscience bothered him and he tried to reason away the uneasy feeling in his conscience.

If the Lord Jesus told me the only way I could inherit eternal life was by obeying God's law I would feel very uneasy as well. This is the purpose of God's law: to show us how sinful we really are. No doubt this was the effect upon this man. He tried to defend himself against the obvious fact that he did not love God or his neighbor.

Notice that the Lord Jesus always gave the law to people who tried to justify themselves? But for those who were broken he showed grace and compassion. When this man tried to justify himself and ask "who is my neighbor?" Jesus told him the parable of the good Samaritan.

The purpose of the parable was to demonstrate what love for one's neighbor looks like. It crosses over racial, ethnic, and language barriers. Who is my neighbor? My neighbor is anyone I come into contact with who needs my help. To love your neighbor means to be ready to help anyone in your life who asks for your help or obviously needs your help. Love for neighbor does not take into consideration race, religion, language, or ethnic background. Love will try to help someone, even if that person is your moral or racial or religious enemy. The Lord Jesus said we are to love our enemies and bless those who curse us.

When the Lord Jesus asked the man who the true neighbor was in the parable the man answered correctly. The one who showed mercy. Now, this man had no excuses left. The law of God exposed his sinful human nature plainly and revealed our need for the Savior Jesus Christ. Only the Lord Jesus Christ can give us eternal life. It is a gift from God to us through our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We trust in Jesus Christ and his finished and completed work upon Calvary. Jesus Christ died for our sins upon the cross, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

Luke 10:38-42

In these brief verses we are introduced to two women and who are set in contrast. Mary wanted to sit and listen to the Lord Jesus. However, Martha was busy with activity. Her activity was no doubt honorable and good. She was taking care of needs, serving food, and ministering to people. However, she stopped and noticed her sister was not helping. She asked the Lord Jesus to correct Mary but instead the Lord Jesus corrected Martha.

There is a spiritual lesson in this contrast between Mary and Martha. I think what we see here is a contrast between the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith and that of a works based, man-centered salvation. Here we see an example of Mary who is hearing, receiving, and believing the word of God. On the other hand, Martha might be listening but she cannot receive because she is busy with her own thoughts and actions. She is preoccupied with good works and striving to serve in the flesh. This is a contrast of two people in the house of God. One is striving in the flesh to live for God. The other is walking by faith and living in the Spirit and who simply believes God's word.

The Lord Jesus commended Mary and said she chose "that good part". He said that it would not be taken away from her. Here we see an indication that our salvation is secure in the Lord Jesus. It cannot be taken away from us. We did not work for it nor did we earn it. We simply heard the word of God and received and believed the word of God. No one can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Nothing shall separate us from the love of God. Nothing can take us out of God's hands.

This distinction in the house of God between the flesh and the spirit goes all the way through the Bible from the time of Cain and Abel all the way through the New Testament. There is a constant discerning between that which is of the flesh and that which is of the Spirit. This is seen in the work of the priest in the Old Testament. They were to teach the people to discern between what is holy and what is profane. God's word is like a sharp sword that cuts asunder between soul and spirit. It is important to allow God's word to deliver us from our flesh self life and teach us to live according to the Spirit. Only the word of God can do this. That is why we must hear, receive, and believe the word of God. There is no other way to walk in the Spirit.

Here is a good bible verse that summarizes this idea of God's word separating between flesh, soul, and spirit.

Hebrews 4:12, *"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."*

Allow the word of God to search you and set you free from self, sin, the world, and the devil. God's word will set you free also from death itself. God's word inside of you gives eternal life, and will cause you to rise up and declare the works of the Lord. I shall not die but I will live and declare the works of the Lord.

Receive God's word today. Believe in God's word. Abide in his word and continue to walk in his word every single day. Just like Israel, you must seek your bread every single day. Collect it, process it, and ingest the bread of life. It is your life. It is your bread and the living water for your soul.

Teach Us To Pray – Luke Chapter 11

Luke 11:1-13

The disciples of the Lord Jesus watched him pray. They listened to him and observed him in prayer to his heavenly Father. As a result they were inspired to pray themselves but felt inadequate. They asked the Lord Jesus to teach them how to pray as John the Baptist also taught his disciples. Perhaps this disciple previously was a disciple of John the Baptist?

The Lord answered this request and not only provided an example model prayer but also encouraged his disciples to have faith when they pray and to persist in praying to God. He gave them an example of how evil men will give to their friends. Or how human parents, even though they are evil, give to their children. The point was how much more does God our Father answer our prayers? The Lord answers our prayers. He is listening for us to pray. The Lord Jesus encourages us to ask, seek, and knock and we will receive from our heavenly Father.

I've heard atheists say they tried God at one time. He did not answer their prayers and so they gave up on him. The problem with this approach is simple. They did not believe in God to start with. Scripture teaches us that anyone who comes to God must believe that he is and that he rewards those who diligently seek him. If you don't believe you will never receive anything from God. What this atheist did was tempt God, which is breaking God's law. They are fortunate God did not answer their prayers by striking them down for their unbelief.

The Lord provided a model example prayer for us. I've followed this model prayer for a long time when I pray. It is good to memorize this prayer, because within this prayer is everything we need to pray about. We are encouraged to ask for God to forgive us. We are taught to pray for our daily needs. We are taught to pray that we can escape from evil. Within this prayer we learn that God is our provider, God is our protector, and God is our portion forever. God is our Father who is in heaven. We should pray that his kingdom come and that his will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

The Lord will answer this prayer. He promised that his kingdom will come to this earth. His will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven. When we pray this we are praying according to the will of God and he hears this prayer and will answer it.

Let us pray that we will be a part of his kingdom. When we pray for his kingdom to come let us pray that we may be found worthy to be a participant in his kingdom.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Put your faith in Jesus. Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

Luke 11:14-26

The Lord Jesus cast out a devil that caused a person to be unable to speak. The word "dumb" was used, which means the inability to speak. Once the devil was cast out of the person he was able to speak. The

people wondered when they saw this. It doesn't say they believed in the Lord Jesus but that they "wondered". Then there was another group there who attacked the Lord Jesus when he cast out devils. They tried to tempt him and demanded that he show them a sign from heaven. They accused him of casting out devils by the power of the devil.

The Lord Jesus responded when he said that a house or a kingdom which is divided against itself cannot stand. In other words it was not possible to cast out devils with the power of the devil. These people thought the Lord Jesus deceived them with satanic power but in reality he cast out devils by the Spirit of God. These people did not want to believe in the Lord Jesus. Those who did not want to believe in the Lord Jesus were on the side of the lie which is the devil. The people on the devil's side accused the Lord Jesus of casting out devils by the power of the devil. Notice how subtle the devil is. He is the accuser of the brethren. However, the Lord Jesus exposed their hypocrisy with a logical argument. How can a house or kingdom divided against itself stand?

He went on to illustrate his point when he said that a man's house cannot be broken into unless you tie up the owner of the house first. The owner of a house is called a "strongman". The strongman must be first dealt with then the strongman's house can be robbed. The idea was that it would be impossible for the Lord Jesus to cast out a devil by the power of Satan. That would be like the owner of a house helping a thief rob his own house. It doesn't make sense. Their accusation had no logical basis but it did not stop them. The devil rarely uses logic and if he does it is a twisted logic taking scriptures out of context or through constant repetition. There are many lies that people believe. They believe lies not because of evidence or logic but because of constant repetition. An example of this is Darwin's lie of evolution. It has no basis in science or logic but has been repeated so much people accept it as truth. This is also why propaganda is successful. It doesn't matter what the lie may be. Just keep repeating it over and over and people will believe it out of exhaustion.

The Lord Jesus gave us a brief glimpse into the invisible spiritual world. The Lord Jesus said that when an unclean devil was cast out it traveled through "dry places" and sought rest but it could not find rest so it wanted to return to where it was cast out. Not only did it return but it would bring seven more evil spirits with it. Why? Perhaps it thought it could gain its home back again by sheer weight of numbers? I think this is a good guess. I think a lot of the power of devils lies in the multiplication of numbers. You see this principle active in the world system of politics and business. The more people you bring underneath someone's name, the more numbers you have, the more power and influence you accumulate. This works in politics and also in the business world. It is also very active in the outward external church which bases success on how many numbers of people can be added to a church.

If someone was delivered from devils they needed to receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior immediately. They needed to be filled with the Holy Spirit and renounce all their sin which led to the infestation of devils. Any ground or right the devils had needed to be broken through the confession of sin and heart felt repentance before God.

Be filled with the Holy Spirit. Let your heart and mind be soaked and filled with the word of God. Stay in God's word, and stay in prayer. Pray without ceasing. Read, study, meditate on, memorize and obey the word of God. Walk in the spirit and not in the flesh.

Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus will be saved.

Luke 11:27-28

After he dealt with the opposition of the religious leaders it would be refreshing to hear something positive. A woman from the crowd told the Lord Jesus that his mother was blessed for having him. The Lord Jesus turned around and said a person who heard and kept God's word was blessed. This was an interesting reply and it is worth consideration.

This woman was an early example of what we know today as Catholics. They put emphasis on the mother of the Lord Jesus. This has been a common theme in world religions since the tower of Babel and the mystery religions. This emphasis on the Queen of Heaven and the worship of a mother goddess is a thread which runs all through pagan religions and is one of the foremost symptoms of paganism in the Catholic church.

Mary said that people would call her blessed. Here the Lord Jesus said that anyone who heard God's word and obeyed God's word was blessed. The Lord Jesus probably knew the danger of people worshiping his mother. It was idolatry to worship any person other than the Lord Jesus Christ. When we lift up any person other than the Lord Jesus we become guilty of idolatry. This is why it is so dangerous to give men titles and lift up the names of men. It is man's instinct to worship self and as a result to also worship the names of men. Repent of this! It leads to strife, division, envy, and all kind of sin. It was the main reason why there were so many divisions in the outward church.

Do not be followers after the names of men (or women!). Instead, simply hear God's word and keep it. Walk in obedience to God's word. Do not be followers of men, but instead be followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Walk in the spirit and not in the flesh. Walk by faith and not by sight.

Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus will be saved.

Luke 11:29-36

The Lord Jesus said that an evil generation looked for a sign. This reminds me of how the man who was in hell asked Abraham to send Lazarus to his brothers to warn them about hell. What did Abraham say? If they do not believe the Bible they will not believe the message even if someone rose from the dead to testify. People who seek for signs usually are unbelievers. They do not believe the testimony we have before us in the word of God. Some of these people are religious and may know scripture but do not believe. The fulfillment of bible prophecy stood before them. The Messiah prophesied in the scripture stood before them and they did not believe in him.

The sign of the prophet Jonah was the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Just like Jonah was in the belly of the whale for three days and nights, so also the Lord Jesus was in the belly of the earth three days and three nights and then arose from the dead.

God Most High resurrects from the dead. One day everyone who has died will be resurrected and stand before their creator. It is appointed to men once to die and after this the judgment awaits us.

We need to put our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for the salvation of our souls. We need to believe in the Lord Jesus, his words, his gospel, his finished and completed work upon Calvary. Through what the Lord Jesus accomplished in his death, burial, and resurrection we have received forgiveness of sins and redemption. All of our sins have been washed away. We have been redeemed. We are saved. Believe the word. Receive the word. Obey the word of the Lord.

Luke 11:37-54

The Lord Jesus accepted an invitation to eat at the house of a Pharisee. While he was there the Lord Jesus perceived that his host was hostile toward him because Jesus did not wash his hands before he ate. From this the Lord Jesus began to rebuke these Pharisees, Sadducees, and lawyers. He rebuked with all long suffering and authority. He was careful to point out exactly in what way they were deceiving themselves. Their focus was on outward, external religion but their hearts were filled with evil. The Lord Jesus could see into their heart and he knew they were religious hypocrites. He told them what they were. What was the purpose for this? It was to bring men to repentance. The Lord Jesus said these things not for the purpose of offending people but for the purpose of bringing them to repentance and faith in the living God.

He warned them they would be accountable, not only for their sins, but also for the sins of their forefathers, because they walked in the same pattern as their forefathers. Their fathers killed the prophets and they built their tombs. The Lord Jesus said they approved of what their fathers did.

We should think about this. Consider this deeply. Do we blindly follow the traditions of those who have gone before us, and never evaluate whether or not we are following truth? It is easy to follow the traditions of those who have gone before us. But what if they were wrong? What if what they did was actually against the Lord like those who killed the prophets?

I think we would be amazed to hear what the Lord would say about our outward religion in these last days. Let us pray and ask the Lord to search our hearts and grant us repentance that we may escape every trap of the devil.

Keeping Short Accounts – Luke Chapter 12

Luke 12:1-3

The Lord Jesus taught his disciples to get rid of all hypocrisy. He warned them that whatever they thought was secret in their lives, whatever secret sin they thought they were hiding, was not hidden from the eyes of God. The Lord will shine his light upon us and expose us for the hypocrites that we are. He will make sure that we are exposed if we will not humble ourselves, and repent, and get the sin out of our life. Be sure your sin will find you out!

This was the sin which the Lord Jesus constantly warned about in the lives of the religious leaders. He rebuked the Pharisees, Sadducees, and lawyers because of hypocrisy. He did not rebuke them for doing good deeds or for knowing scripture. He rebuked them because everything they did was for a show. They loved the praise of men rather than the praise of God. Everything they did was for their own

name, their own reputation, their own position, their own title. Their life was a stage production for others to praise them. Not only this but they did serious harm to other people because they did not teach God's word correctly. They laid burdens upon people and did not lift a finger to help them.

Hypocrisy sneaks in when we are blind to our attitudes, words, and actions. We become blind because of pride. The man who is poor and has nothing will have less problem with this. What has he to be proud of? He does not have reputation, or title, or position. But pride can still be found in poverty as well. Proud to be poor. Beware of hypocrisy.

Hypocrisy makes us think we are serving God when we are really only serving ourselves. Hypocrisy makes us think we are worshiping God when in reality we are worshiping ourselves. Beware of hypocrisy.

Hypocrisy is like leaven in flour. It will corrupt and change everything in our lives. Even what we do that is good will become evil. Our good works will be done with bad motives. Our bible study, prayers, and church attendance will all become corrupt and only serve to make us self righteous and think we are better than other people. Beware of hypocrisy. It is self deception. It is self delusion. It is self worship.

Cry out to the Lord and ask him to open your eyes so you can see your sin in the light of who God is. Pray and ask God to shine the light on your hypocrisy, and compromise, and sins. Ask the Lord to help you to repent, and renounce hypocrisy and compromise.

The goal is to inherit the kingdom. Hypocrites will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Matthew 24:48-51, *"But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; 49 And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; 50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, 51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

Luke 12:4-9

The Lord Jesus clearly taught the reality of hell. He exhorted people not to be afraid of men who can only kill the body but be afraid of God who can not only kill the body but also cast the soul into hell. Also, notice the Lord Jesus taught the existence of man's soul after physical death. Here we can see profound truth of the existence beyond the physical realm of the body. However, we are taught as well to fear God who can cast the soul of a man into hell. This is to be avoided at all costs. How do we avoid being cast into hell? It is very simple. Ask God to forgive your sins and receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay the penalty that our sins deserve. He is our atonement. He is the sacrifice for our sins. Trust in his sacrifice and ask him to come into your heart and life. Believe on the Lord Jesus. Call upon the name of the Lord. Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord will be saved! Saved from what? Saved from hell, my friend.

Later in these same verses the Lord Jesus said "Fear not", in the context of God's loving care over our lives. The Lord knows every single detail of our lives. If we trust in the Lord Jesus to save us then he

will save our soul. Not only will he take care of the eternal future but he will also take care of us in the present. The Lord knows all of our needs.

Let us be faithful to confess the Lord Jesus before men. We have a promise that if we confess the Lord Jesus before men then he will confess us before the angels of God. There is also a warning. If we deny him he will also deny us.

The most basic way that a new Christian can confess the Lord Jesus before men is to be baptized. I would encourage any new Christian who has not yet been baptized in water to do so. Find a church who will baptize with full immersion and baptize in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again on the third day. Whosoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

Luke 12:10-12

The Lord Jesus taught us about the Holy Ghost in two different ways here.

First he said that all sin that men commit can be forgiven by God but blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven. Many people speculate as to what the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost might be. In my opinion I think it is as simple as the rejection of the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit convicts men of their sins so that they will turn to Christ and seek forgiveness. If a man rejects the work of the Holy Spirit he will never ask for God to forgive him. As a result, he can never be forgiven because he has rejected the ministry and work of the Holy Spirit in his life. I don't think it is possible for anyone who is a Christian to ever commit this sin, because a Christian will be sensitive enough to be concerned about this issue. If you are ever concerned or upset that you might have done this then it is evident you have not committed this sin. Those who blaspheme the Holy Ghost will not feel any guilt over it. Their conscience was seared as if with a hot iron and they no longer can feel guilt about this.

The Lord Jesus also taught that the Holy Ghost was active in the life of the believer to enable him to be a witness for the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus promised us the Holy Ghost would give us the right words to say when we have an opportunity to witness for Jesus, especially in high stress situations like those who are persecuted or are in danger of martyrdom. The Lord spoke through his disciples and put into their mouth his word. This reminds me of Paul's testimony that even though everyone abandoned him the Lord stood with him and enabled him to preach the gospel to the Gentiles.

2 Timothy 4:16-17, *"At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion."*

Luke 12:13-34

These scriptures point to something that anyone serious about being a disciple of the Lord Jesus needs to learn. This needs to become our lifestyle if we will be disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. The heart of these verses is a contrast between having faith in God for your needs or having an attitude like the world system in which you dedicate your heart and life to your own needs. We either trust in God or we trust in ourselves and that is the bottom line here.

This teaching began when someone asked the Lord Jesus to judge between himself and his brother over an inheritance. The Lord Jesus rebuked the man, and asked him who he thought the Lord Jesus was. The Lord Jesus made it clear that dividing property was not his purpose. Perhaps the man thought the Messiah would come to re-establish the proper boundaries of land for Israel's inheritance. I can see how a Jewish person might have thought like this. A lot of their history had to do with the physical land inheritance in the land of Israel. However, the Lord Jesus took this occasion to teach about the danger of covetousness.

He said to beware of covetousness. This is a rampant problem in the church today. I believe this strongman of covetousness controls large parts of the outward church and is the spirit behind much of the false doctrine and false gospels preached today in mega churches.

The Lord Jesus said that a man's life does not consist in the abundance of what he possesses. He taught his disciples not to allow any preoccupation in our minds with food, clothing, or our natural needs. Why? Because the cares of life would cause them to bear no fruit. God's word cannot bear fruit in the life of someone who is consumed with his own needs all the time. It is a natural human attitude to always think of ourselves and our own needs. God wants to set us free from this natural way of thinking. This is one reason God led Israel through the wilderness and fed them with manna. It was to humble them and teach them that man does not live by bread alone but by every word of God.

I believe this test of provision is fundamental in the life of the Christian and it will especially be a test of anyone God calls into full time Christian service. This test of bread will happen. I can guarantee that you will face this test of provision. The Lord Jesus faced this test in the wilderness. Turn the stones in bread, the devil said. What did Jesus say? He quoted the passage about Israel in the wilderness where they learned that a man does not live by bread alone but by every word of God.

Be prepared to face this test. Memorize Matthew 6:33. Remember that God will provide for your needs. Psalm 23:1 says, "*The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.*"

You might go hungry. The Lord Jesus did. But God will provide for you. He will take care of you. It might not be in a way that you like. Israel complained about the plain light bread they got from God. They should not have done that but it shows us that at times God provides our needs in ways we don't like. Make up your mind to give thanks for whatever way God provides. Make up your mind to thank God for his provision, no matter how it comes, even if God uses your enemies to provide for you. This has happened to me before and it is very humiliating. But that is the point, right? God is humbling us, and teaching us to rely upon him.

God is teaching us not to trust in ourselves, but to trust in the Lord with all of our heart. Don't lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge the Lord. He will direct your paths.

Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Make sure your treasure is in heaven, and not on earth.

Luke 12:35-48

Here the Lord exhorted his servants to be ready for his return. The Lord Jesus taught about his return while he was with his disciples. Perhaps this was why Peter asked the Lord if this teaching was for them (the disciples) or for everyone. The Lord Jesus replied with a question. Who is the faithful and wise steward?

We are called as servants and as stewards. We are to be faithful with what the Lord has given us. We are to share with others the gospel which we have heard, received, and believed. We are to give to others what God has given to us so others can be saved as well.

The underlying message was to live with an expectation of standing before the Lord's inspection. The Lord will return. We will give an account for our lives before the Lord. The Lord is speaking to those who are his servants. Those who are in the household of faith will be called to give an account.

The Lord said that those who live in expectation of this inspection and the Lord's return would be blessed. Blessed is that servant whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. We are to occupy until the Lord returns. We are to live every day in light of God's kingdom. This is why any doctrine or message that causes us to lose sight of the future kingdom is so dangerous. Any doctrine or message that causes us to focus our heart upon the here and now and living our best life now is dangerous. It is a doctrine of the enemy to get our hearts and minds upon ourselves and to turn away our hearts from living in light of the return of Jesus Christ.

Let us cultivate a fear of the Lord and his inspection. We want to be found by the Lord as faithful servants and faithful stewards over that which he has given to us.

Also, notice the Lord made clear that the more light and knowledge of the truth we have the more accountable we become. Those who know God's will and neglect to obey God are beaten with many stripes. Not only are we to be concerned about the loss of rewards at the judgment seat of Christ but we should also realize there is a real possibility of discipline.

Verse 46 is shocking when we realize that he spoke to servants in the household of faith. "*The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.*" I don't know the full implication of what this means but I do know that I want to get very far away from this judgment. This kind of bible verse puts the fear of God in my heart.

The portion which unbelievers have is this present and temporary life in the body here on earth. They have their reward in this life. Do you want your portion to be the same as that of unbelievers? Do you want to invest your life in the success that comes from the world system? If you live your life for this world then you will have your portion in this world too. You will not receive a reward or inheritance in God's kingdom.

This should put the fear of God into our hearts. We need to make some major adjustments in the way we live, and think, and our attitudes towards our relationship with the Lord and with one another. Let us learn how to invest ourselves into what will count for eternity.

Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again on the third day.

Romans 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Luke 12:49-53

The Lord Jesus made it clear that he divided people. People were either for him or against him. The reality of Jesus Christ should be clear to anyone who has seen this division taking place in their relationships.

I saw it myself. The more I loved the Lord Jesus the more people I once knew who did not love the Lord Jesus were repelled by me.

It is interesting how they always find a reason to hate the Christian. They tell themselves their reasons but never admit that their hatred is simply because this person is a true Christian. They can't see this because they live in darkness and love the darkness. They hate the brother or sister who walking in the light of Jesus Christ. They don't even know why they hate this Christian and come up with all kinds of reasons. They will gossip, slander, and look down their nose at the Christian.

Why? Why? The Lord Jesus showed us right here. The Lord Jesus was so real that he divided people. This is proof of the reality of the Lord Jesus Christ. People cannot be neutral towards the Lord Jesus Christ. When they meet someone who is full of Jesus they will love him or hate him. There is no middle ground.

This message is for brothers and sisters in Christ who mourn because of lost family members. Don't feel guilty because your family hates you. Don't feel like there is something wrong with you when they separate you from their company. The Lord Jesus Christ was treated the same way. You are not better than Jesus. Accept the suffering from your family as a normal part of your Christian life then you can rejoice. Rejoice and be glad that people turn their back on you. It is proof that the Lord Jesus Christ is shining his light through you. They hate you because you are a Christian. There is no reason to ever be ashamed of being a Christian.

1 Peter 4:16, *"Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf."*

The Lord Jesus is the Word of God. He divides people from one another. He separated the sheep from the goats. He separated the wheat from the tares. He separated and divided. The Lord Jesus discerned between what is holy and what is profane.

Be encouraged today. Continue to seek the Lord Jesus with all of your heart, mind, soul, and spirit. Continue to stay in God's word and in prayer. The Lord is near. Soon, we will be with our real family in the kingdom of God. Then we will never again have a family member turn their back on us again.

Luke 12:54-57

The Lord taught us that we need to discern the time we live in. He called the people who could discern the weather but not their time "hypocrites". They had an appearance of wisdom, but could not recognize the Lord Jesus himself who stood in front of them. Blindness and hypocrisy go hand in hand.

What time do we live in today? Since I was a young Christian I've prayed the Lord would help me to know the time I lived in. Not that I would be afraid but so that I could lift up my head and rejoice because my redemption draws near.

When I look around at the world today I have no doubt that the kingdom of God is near. Many prophecies in the Bible are fulfilled. The rapture of the church is not far off. The seven year tribulation is not far away. The thousand year reign of Christ is coming soon. We have a lot to look forward to.

How do we discern the time we live in? We need to study the scriptures, and then compare what the Lord Jesus said about the last days to what is happening around us.

The first thing the Lord Jesus warned about in the last days would be deception. This is happening all around us. Our media today is non-stop propaganda. It is all constant lies and deception.

Within the church there are many doctrines of devils promoted which indicates the last days are upon us. The Bible talks about a great falling away in the last days. There is an apostasy happening within the church and there is also a falling away from truth throughout the world. The world is falling away from the general revelation of God, and the church is falling away from the specific revelation of truth in the scriptures.

These doctrines of demons can be discerned, but it takes someone who walks humbly with God, who studies the scripture, and who prays for spiritual discernment. Pray and ask the Lord for wisdom. Pray and ask the Lord to lead you to solid bible teaching.

Do not believe the lies of religious sounding people on the internet. Study the Bible yourself and look for Christians in your local area who call upon the Lord out of a pure heart. Be active in sharing your faith with other people. We need to give to others what God gives to us.

Ask the Lord to help you discern the times. You need to know the day in which you are living.

We are living in the last days. Jesus is coming soon. Watch and pray. Pray that you may be found by the Lord faithfully serving the Lord Jesus.

Whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.

Luke 12:58-59

I think it is plain here that the Lord Jesus taught us to keep short accounts with people. Don't get into debt. Also, don't allow yourself to be dragged into a legal battle with anyone. Settle things one on one. Settle things outside of a court where you still have control of the situation. If you allow things to deteriorate to the point of going to court then you lose control and may get into a situation over your head.

Spiritually, I think this teaches that we should be ready to admit when we are wrong and confess our sins. The adversary is Satan. He is the accuser of the brethren. Sometimes when he makes his accusations against us he is right. We do sin. We fail the Lord and we sin against other people. When this happens then agree that the accusation is true but then let us go to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus paid the penalty for our sins. We must confess our sins, however, and acknowledge these sins. When we confess our sins then the Lord is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9. Underline this bible verse and memorize it.

Agreeing with the adversary requires humility on our part. Whatever argument we may have with anyone is not worth going to court. It is not worth justifying yourself before God or before men. Just humble yourself and confess your sins to the Lord. Don't allow the accuser any ground to continue accusing you. Once you plead the blood of Jesus and confess your sins to God then the adversary loses all of his power.

Notice there is a progression outlined here as well. Whatever the problem is the adversary is not content until you have been brought before the judge, handed over to the officer, and then cast into a prison. The adversary wants you to suffer.

Spare yourself much pain by dealing with sin quickly. Keep short accounts. Don't let the sun go down on your wrath. Do not give the devil a foothold in your life. Close every door that the enemy might try to come through to get at you. You do this by humility, by repentance, by confessing to God. Plead the blood of Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 7:25, *"Wherefore he (Jesus) is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."*

Repent or Perish – Luke Chapter 13

Luke 13:1-9

The Lord Jesus taught men that unless they repent they shall perish. People told him about a tragedy where people died. The idea was that those people must have been terrible sinners to die in such a horrific manner. However, the Lord made it clear that those who died in that manner were no more sinners than those who related the story to him.

Unless men repent they will all perish. Repent! What do we repent of? Ask the Lord, and he will show you. The Lord will put his finger on whatever there is in your life that you need to repent of. When a man came to the Lord Jesus and asked him for eternal life the Lord Jesus told him to sell everything and follow him. The man would not do it because he was rich. The Lord will tell you what you need to repent of. In my life he has been faithful to correct me. I did not always listen to the Lord, and I am thankful he had mercy on me, until I got to the point where I was humble enough to truly repent.

Anyone who refused to listen to the Lord will perish in their sins. The only hope we have is to hear the word of the Lord, repent, and believe the gospel. Believe the gospel! Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Why will you die in your sins? It is not God's will for any one to die in their sins and perish in hellfire. It is God's will for everyone to come to repentance and be saved.

Acts 17:30-31, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

Jesus Christ is coming back. He will judge this world in righteousness. Humble yourselves now, repent, believe the gospel. Prepare to meet thy God! He will return, as sure as day follows night, the Lord is coming back to this earth.

Psalms 50:1-4, "The mighty God, even the LORD, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. 2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. 3 Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. 4 He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people."

Repent or perish. The choice is yours.

Luke 13:10-17

The Lord Jesus taught in a synagogue on the Sabbath day. There was a woman bound by a spirit of infirmity eighteen years. The spirit of infirmity caused her to be "bowed together". The Lord Jesus laid his hands on the woman and immediately she was made straight. The Lord Jesus commanded her to be healed with his word "thou art loosed from thine infirmity".

The ruler of the synagogue condemned the Lord Jesus for healing the woman on a Sabbath day. The Lord pointed out that people will take care of their farm animals on a Sabbath day. They feed and water their farm animals on a Sabbath day. How much more valuable is this woman than a farm animal? He silenced his enemies in shame. They could not stand against his logic.

It is clear the devil can physically afflict people with sickness. I don't know how often we consider this when we suffer in our bodies. How often do we pray when we are sick? Is it possible that we might be suffering physically because of a spiritual problem in our life? We need to ask the Lord to shine his light on us. We need to pray that the Lord will show us any sin in our life. We need to pray and ask the

Lord to expose any devils which might be causing us to suffer in our physical bodies. We know that the devil was able to cause boils upon the body of God's prophet Job. If this is possible, should we not consider this when we are sick? Should we not pray and take authority in the name of Jesus against any unclean spirits which might be trying to make us sick?

The Lord Jesus exposed hypocrisy. When we care more about religion than we do about people there is a real problem. These people were more concerned for church decorum than the suffering of people in the church. Are we more focused on church programs than on the people within the church who are suffering? How much do we care about the people around us? Do we know their names? Do we pray for them? Do you love the people in the church?

The Lord Jesus healed them from sickness and disease. Let us pray and ask the Lord to heal our bodies and our souls. He is able to heal the sick and to set us free from the power of darkness.

Luke 13:18-21

When the Lord Jesus described the kingdom of God we might assume he described something positive or uplifting. In both these descriptions of the kingdom the meaning was not positive and it was not uplifting.

The Lord Jesus said the kingdom of God was like a mustard seed which was planted and grew into a huge tree and the fowls of the air came and lodged in the branches. These birds do not represent something good. Instead, the birds in the branches represent evil which infiltrated Israel, the church, and the nations. These birds were not a good sign. Birds were invited to feast upon the dead. Birds were not a good sign in the Bible usually.

In the next illustration he compared the kingdom to three measures of meal that had leaven mixed in. Leaven was a symbol of sin in the Bible. We are admonished to get leaven out of our lives. Leaven is a picture of how sin starts out small but when it is mixed into your life it corrupts you from the inside out. It completely changes who you are.

This second illustration confirms that the birds in the first illustration were not good. Both of these examples of what the kingdom of God was like showed how the kingdom of God on earth is vulnerable to infiltration. The forces of Satan came into Israel, they came into the church, and they will infest the nations. Sin, the devil, self, and the world system corrupt what is good in the kingdom of God on earth.

Why did the Lord Jesus teach us this? So we would not be surprised when we find people full of the devil in church? Don't be surprised to find hypocrites. Don't be surprised to find tares among the wheat. This is how things are right now. This is how it will be until the Lord returns and sends his angels to separate the wheat from the tares. The Lord will remove the leaven one day. The Lord will remove the evil birds roosting in the branches one day.

Meanwhile, we are to occupy until he comes. Continue to preach the gospel. Continue to witness, testify, and lift up the name of Jesus Christ. Don't be discouraged by the leaven and the birds. Make sure you have no leaven or birds in your life. Make sure you are living before God with clean hands and a pure heart.

Let us pray with David, *"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."* (Psalm 139:23-24)

Luke 13:22-30

Someone asked the Lord Jesus the question would there be few people saved? The Lord Jesus said that many people would try to enter in and would not be able. Then he described the master of the house rising up and closing his door. There were people standing outside the house when he closed the door. Those people now try to gain entrance by saying they knew the master of the house. But he said to them that he did not know them. They were not in his house when the door was closed. This reminds me of Noah and the ark. A lot of people heard the message Noah preached. But how many people were in the ark when the door was closed? Very few indeed. How many people of the original group of Israel who left Egypt actually made it into the promised land? Of all the original group who left Egypt, out of hundreds of thousands of people, only two men made it into the promised land, Joshua and Caleb. What does this tell us?

We should tremble in our shoes. We should take God's word serious and obey what the Lord says. Strive to enter in at the strait gate. Jesus Christ is the strait gate. There is no other way to the Father. Jesus is the only way to the Father. To get into God's house you have to enter in by the only door which God has made. That door is Jesus Christ himself.

Notice that the Lord Jesus also pointed out that many people from different parts of the world would be saved. He looked forward to the future when the gospel would be preached to every nation under heaven. God saves people from every nation, tongue, and language.

It doesn't matter if you think you know the Lord. Does the Lord know you? Does the Lord know your name? Is your name written in the Lamb's books of life?

There is only one way to be saved.

Acts 4:12, *"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."*

John 14:6, *"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."*

How can I be saved today?

Acts 16:30-31, *"And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."*

Romans 10:9-10, 13, *"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."*

Be saved today!

2 Corinthians 6:2, *"For he saith, I have thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation"*

Luke 13:31-35

The Pharisees tried to warn the Lord Jesus that Herod wanted to kill him. We know this is a lie because later on when Herod had a chance to kill the Lord Jesus he did not but sent him back to Pilate. Why did the Pharisees tell Jesus this lie? Perhaps it was the same reason why people tried to intimidate Nehemiah from rebuilding the walls? They thought they could scare Jesus and make him run away?

The Lord Jesus was not afraid. He knew exactly what his purpose was. He went to Jerusalem and he knew he would be turned over to the Romans by the Jewish religious leaders. He knew he would be condemned and executed at Calvary. He prophesied what would happen to himself. He said a prophet could not die outside of Jerusalem. He prophesied what would happen to Jerusalem. It would be left desolate.

The Lord Jesus was not afraid of religious or political leaders. He stood his ground and set himself to walk in obedience to his heavenly Father. Sooner or later the enemy will threaten us and try to turn us aside from obeying the Lord. We must continue to be steadfast and unmovable. We must abound in the work of the Lord because we know our labor in the Lord is not in vain.

Notice the Lord Jesus injected the "third day" into his reply. This shows that Jesus knew he would rise from the dead on the third day. He repeated this again when he said "I must walk today, and tomorrow, and the day following". There is a pattern in the Bible with three days.

God is three in one. Prophet, priest, and king. Israel, church, and the nations. Three days and all will be complete in the New Jerusalem.

Everything in creation gives glory to God. It reflects who he is. Three days is a reflection of who God is. He is three in one.

The Cost Of Being A Disciple of Jesus – Luke Chapter 14**Luke 14:1-6**

The Lord Jesus was in the house of a chief Pharisee on a Sabbath day and broke with the tradition of the religious leaders in order to heal a man sick from something called "dropsy". The Lord Jesus challenged the religious leaders and asked them the question, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?" They did not answer him. He pointed out that common sense said if you can take care of your farm animals on the sabbath day then surely you can help a man on the sabbath day. The religious leaders would not answer him.

Here I believe the Lord Jesus was purposely doing good while at the same time he applied pressure to the religious leaders. He healed a man. This should be proof that he was from God and was doing the work of God. He challenged them specifically in regard to their religious traditions. I think the Lord still does this today. When God wants to deliver people he will challenge the religious traditions people have and especially religious traditions that are man-made. I think we would be amazed to know how many religious traditions we have which are man-made and are not from God at all.

We can easily see how many strange religious traditions the Pharisees held. But the Christian church has had 2,000 years to develop and accumulate man-made religious traditions. How do you know which religious traditions are from the Lord and what are simply man-made traditions?

We should pray and ask the Lord to help us let go of any religious traditions which are not of him, from him, or by him. We need to allow the Holy Spirit to set us free from man-made religion so we can truly be used by God to see souls saved, people healed, and lives changed for the glory and honor of God.

The Lord Jesus came into the world to seek and save those who were lost. He died upon the cross of Calvary for our sins. He was buried in a tomb, and three days later he rose from the dead. He is able to save to the uttermost those who come to God by him, for he now lives forever to make intercession for us. There is no other mediator between God and man except for Christ Jesus. He is the priest and the mediator. He is the only way to God. Whosoever will call upon the name of the Lord Jesus will be saved.

Luke 14:7-11

The Lord Jesus noticed people took the chief rooms at a feast. They assumed their own importance and wanted to be over other people. This is the pride of life. The Lord Jesus taught the Pharisees that their attitude of taking the chief places for themselves would result in God opposing them. He taught them to humble themselves and take the low place so instead of being embarrassed when they were told to go lower they would instead be happy if they were asked to go up higher. God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. This is repeated by Peter and also James in their letters. This is a fundamental teaching for Christians and the church. Do not exalt yourself.

When people claim to be "gods" they are exalting themselves. God calls us to humble ourselves. This is the example of the Lord Jesus Christ. Read Philippians chapter 2. The Lord Jesus humbled himself. The Lord Jesus washed the feet of his disciples and said he gave us an example of humility. We are to consider others better than ourselves (Romans 12:3, 10)

Nebuchadnezzar learned that God is able to abase those who walk in pride. Pride is the fountain of unbelief and disobedience to God. When we walk in pride we think we know better than the word of God. When we walk in pride then God opposes us. It is God's nature to hate pride and arrogance.

Proverbs 8:13, *"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate."*

Instead, humble yourselves before the Lord.

James 4:10, "*Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.*"

Listen to what the Lord Jesus said to these religious leaders. Search your heart and see if there is pride or arrogance in your heart. Ask the Lord to search you and show it to you. Determine that you will confess your sins to the Lord, and repent, and determine to walk with the Lord with a humble heart.

Luke 14:12-24

The Lord Jesus was invited to a meal with the religious leaders. He noticed the people who were invited to this feast were all people who could reciprocate the host. In other words, each person who was there could repay the invitation. This is how the world operates: scratch my back, and I will scratch your back. Give to me and I will give to you. But this is not how the Kingdom of God operates. In God's Kingdom we give and do not expect anything to be given back to us. The Lord Jesus taught them to have a supper and invite people who could not return the favor. He said to invite the poor, maimed, lame, and blind. If you act like this then God will reward you in his kingdom at the resurrection of the just.

What does this teach us? We see here a contrast between the principle of the world system and the kingdom of God. God does not view people by what they can do for him or how they can pay him back.

But how do men see one another? They create friendships with people with whom they think can add value back to themselves. People are viewed as "assets" instead of as people. As long as you serve a purpose these people will be your friend. As soon as they think you can no longer benefit them they drop you as their friend. I have personally experienced this and it is disheartening and discouraging, especially when the person who turns their back on you professes to be a Christian.

My goal is not to base my relationships with people on what they can do for me. Instead, I should have the attitude of someone in God's kingdom. What can I do for others? How can I serve? How can I be a blessing to others? I wish that I had lived like this in the past because it would have made a big difference. How many friends have I lost in the past because I looked at them as "assets" and not as people with intrinsic value to God?

The Lord Jesus went on to tell a parable about a feast which would take place in God's kingdom. Many people were invited but there were some who made excuses for why they could not come to the feast. These excuses were basically made because those who were invited were self-centered and worshiped themselves. They did not care about the person who made the invitation.

God help us to open our heart today and truly care about people. I do not want to make excuses to God as to why I cannot obey him.

Lord, help me to be obedient to you. Help me to love the truth, receive the truth, and to obey the truth when you speak to me today.

Luke 14:25-35

There is a cost in following the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus was upfront about how this would look to the world around us. Following the Lord Jesus would at times make the world think you don't love your family. You may find yourself in a situation where you have to choose between the Lord Jesus and your family. In that situation if love for your family stops you from obeying the Lord Jesus then you are really not a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. Sometimes when we follow the Lord Jesus it may appear to the world that we don't even love our self. It might appear to others we are making decisions that are not in our own best interest. This confuses people in the world who do not know Jesus. They will think we are foolish when we make decisions that are not in our best interest because we love the Lord Jesus and want to be his disciple.

What happens if you start following the Lord Jesus but turn aside? What if you stop obeying the Lord after years of following him? The Lord Jesus said this is like salt which loses its flavor. Because you followed the Lord it changed you and the world doesn't like you anymore. However, because you stopped obeying the Lord then Christians are not comfortable around you either. What happens? The Lord Jesus said they were like salt which lost its flavor and was no longer good for anything but to be cast out.

Discipleship is serious. We must be prepared to follow the Lord Jesus no matter where that takes us, and no matter what the personal cost to ourselves or to our relationships with other people. We must put the Lord first.

If we truly know the Lord and love him then hopefully the memory of knowing him and loving him will bring us back to active obedience. Sometimes it does. But I've seen the danger in myself and in other people of going along with the world or living for self. I've seen the natural tendency to drift away from following the Lord and it is frightening. May God be faithful to reprove, rebuke, and correct me. And may I have such a love for the truth that I will be like King David and admit, "I have sinned against the Lord". The Lord does forgive and he does restore.

Don't let another moment go by without humbling yourself and crying out to God. Return once again to active obedience in your relationship with the Lord and his word.

The Prodigal Son – Luke Chapter 15

Luke 15:1-10

The Lord Jesus was criticized for spending time with sinners. He spent time with them, taught them about the kingdom, and ate meals with them. The religious leaders condemned the Lord Jesus for spending time with sinners and eating a meal with them.

Looking back on this we can see the religious hypocrisy of the Pharisees but it was not apparent to religious people in that time. There was a lot of history in the Old Testament which taught separation between the righteous and the wicked. Read the book of Nehemiah and you see a man who was so mad that Jews married foreigners that he pulled his hair out. This was the religious background the

Pharisees came from. No doubt they put scriptures in the wrong context. But this is what people do. In order for people to justify their unbelief they twist scripture and take it out of context.

The Lord Jesus made it clear that his goal was to reach sinners with the gospel. He was there on purpose to demonstrate the reality of God's love for every person. He gave them simple parables about a shepherd who looked for one lost sheep. He told a story about a woman who searched for a lost coin and found it. These stories demonstrated the joy God has when one sinner repents and puts his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said there was joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repented.

We should rejoice when sinners come to the saving knowledge of the Lord. We should pray that God will use us to reach people with the gospel. The religious leaders did not know God's heart of love for people. Their entire focus was on rules and keeping people under a religious system. Anyone who disturbed the religious system was condemned. The Lord Jesus certainly upset the religious system. Almost everything he did was a challenge to dead religion and tradition. He constantly challenged the religious ideas the Pharisees held.

God loves us! He reaches out to every person. It is not God's will that any perish. The Lord's desire is for everyone to hear the gospel, repent, and put faith in the Lord Jesus.

God provided forgiveness of sins through faith in Jesus. The Lord Jesus died on the cross in our place. He was buried. He rose again on the third day. Whosoever calls on the name of the Lord is saved.

Luke 15:11-32

This is a well known parable of the Lord Jesus. It followed the criticism the Lord Jesus received from the religious leaders who thought that the Lord Jesus was wrong to associate with sinners. The Lord Jesus taught through parables that the angels in heaven rejoice when one sinner repents.

This was a longer parable but had the same message and included the reaction of the Jews to the salvation of the lost.

In this parable a father had two sons. The younger sons wanted his inheritance immediately and did not wait. The father gave the son his inheritance and the son left. The younger son wasted his inheritance by living a sinful life. Eventually the young man's sins caught up to him and he was left in poverty. As a result he repented through his suffering and decided to return to his father. The father was on the edge of his seat waiting for his son to return. As soon as the son got close to home the father ran out to meet him and threw a big party to celebrate his return. When the older brother realized there was a party to celebrate his younger brother he was angry. He did not realize why the father was happy about the younger brother's return. He thought his father should love him more because he was faithful to his father and did not waste any inheritance.

This story revealed a lot. The important thing this parable showed was the love of the father. God our Father loves us more than we can possibly comprehend. He loves us so much he sent his Son Jesus Christ into this world to die upon the cross in our place so our sins could be forgiven. God is eager to run to anyone who turns in his direction. The Lord runs out to meet you where you are in life. All you

have to do is turn towards him and he will run to meet you. The Lord will clothe you in his righteousness and adopt you into his family. He will rejoice that you come to his house and will celebrate with everyone who is in heaven.

I think we miss this sometimes. We forget that a large part of what the church is here for is the great commission. We are called to be ambassadors for Christ. Our purpose is to preach the gospel and reach people with the good news that God loves them. He loves them so much that the Lord Jesus died on the cross in their place so they can be forgiven and receive eternal life.

Listen to the words of the father. Verse 32, *"It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found."*

Let us rejoice today in what God rejoices in.

Hell Is Real – Luke Chapter 16

Luke 16:1-12

In one of the Lord's parables a rich man fired his steward. The steward figured out a way he could continue his lifestyle after he lost his job. He cheated his master by having all his master's customers cut their bill in half. What did this accomplish? The steward traded in his master's money and purchased for himself friends. Friends can be more valuable than money or a job at times in life. This man knew all he had left after losing his job was the charity of people. In order to secure their friendship and charity he cut their bill in half of what they owed his master.

Why did the Lord tell this parable? It showed the steward was smart enough to think ahead and secure his future. He used the resources he had and even resources which were not his own but what he had control over in order to secure his future.

The Lord said people in the world were smarter than most of God's children in this respect. Christians do not give any thought about the end of their life. They are short sighted and only think about the current life in the world system. Instead, they should use their time, energy, and resources to prepare for what will come in the kingdom. Paul mentioned this in 1 Timothy 6 when he exhorted people who had worldly resources to invest those resources into what would count in God's kingdom.

1 Timothy 6:17-19, *"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."*

We should use everything we have including gifts, talents, or earthly resources and invest into what will truly count when we stand before the Lord. We should think about our reward, inheritance, and crown we hope to receive at the judgment seat of Christ. We need to get our mind off earthly things and set our mind on things above and allow this to impact how we live, how we relate to people, and how we manage our earthly resources.

Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again on the third day. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

Acts 2:21, *"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."*

Luke 16:13-18

The Lord Jesus revealed a spiritual principle which was unchangeable. A man can only serve one master.

He will either serve God or he will serve himself. You cannot love God and money. You cannot love God and the devil. You cannot walk in light and darkness. You cannot be both. You cannot be holy and profane. People who try to do this become double minded and speak with a forked tongue. The devil taught this doctrine of the knowledge of good and evil. Man tried to make himself into a god by becoming the judge of what is good and evil but the Lord is the true judge. You cannot serve self and God. You either serve God or you serve yourself. If you serve self you turn your soul into a bottomless abyss of darkness.

The religious leaders mocked the Lord Jesus for teaching this because they loved money and thought they loved God, too. However, they were religious hypocrites. They were self deceived. They lied to themselves. This is why they could not believe in the Lord Jesus because they already believed the lie of the devil.

This is crucial! This is fundamental! People think they can have God and their own life, opinions, or self. You cannot. the Lord Jesus plainly said if anyone would come after him they must deny self, take up the cross, and follow him. To live for God means we must die to self. We must surrender our lives to God.

The wonderful thing about God is that he can raise the dead. Once you are completely dead then he gives you a new life which is much better than anything you could have ever imagined.

Let us continue to surrender ourselves to God.

Romans 12:1, *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."*

You cannot serve two masters. You will be mastered by sin or you will be mastered by the Lord Jesus Christ. The only choice we have is which master we will give our life to. One road leads to death. One road leads to eternal life.

Romans 6:23, *"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."*

Luke 16:19-31

Some may think this account of the rich man and Lazarus was a parable but it was much more than a parable. There were no other parables where people had actual names. This was the only story the Lord Jesus told where he gave a person a name. This was not merely a story but a real account of a literal event which the Lord Jesus knew about.

Notice the villain in the story who went to hell was a rich man. This was not an accident. Notice the man who went to paradise was a poor man. This was not an accident. Notice the rich man who made a name for himself on earth did not have a name in hell but the poor man Lazarus had a name that was known not only on earth but also in heaven. Even the rich man in hell knew the name of Lazarus but we still do not know the name of the rich man. Those who make a name for themselves in this earth will be forgotten but those who make the name of the Lord Jesus great will be remembered forever.

Proverbs 10:7, *"The memory of the just is blessed: but the name of wicked shall rot."*

Hell is a literal place of burning flame and torment. There is no water there to drink. A man will be thirsty but he will have no water to drink in that place. He will be tormented in a flame that burns him but will never consume him. He will continue to suffer forever with flames that burn him and with a thirst which is never quenched. This is just a small glimpse of the horror that is hell. It is eternal and lasts forever and ever.

Repent! Why will you die and go to hell? Even those who are in hell want to send preachers to tell you to repent! The most wicked and vile people in hell pray for God to send preachers and evangelists to warn people on the earth not to come to that place of torment! How awful it must be. How horrifying is a place that even the wicked dead would warn us not to come there.

May God open our eyes to this reality. May the truth so grip our heart we will fall on our knees, humble ourselves, and repent and put all our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Call upon the name of the Lord Jesus! Whosoever will call upon the name of the Lord Jesus will be saved.

Days Of The Son of Man – Luke Chapter 17

Luke 17:1-10

The Lord Jesus taught that sin would come into the world but woe to the person through whom the sin came. Remember Judas participated in the ministry of the Lord Jesus for three years and yet at the crucial moment Satan filled his heart and he betrayed the Lord. The Lord Jesus warned us of the dire consequences of being a stumbling block to other people. He pointed to "these little ones". This could be taken literally as talking about children, and I think it also encompassed those who have little faith, or new faith, as in new Christians. People who have little faith or weak faith could also be included in this, in my opinion, as he also taught about forgiveness.

The Lord Jesus taught that we should always forgive and continue to forgive no matter what. This seemed too much to ask the disciples and they asked him to increase their faith. The Lord Jesus said that what was needed was not a great faith because even someone with small faith could move

mountains. What we really need is to love one another. The Lord Jesus gave us the example of love. And this love is our duty. Even after we have loved to the uttermost we have only done our duty.

If we open our hearts to God then the Lord will give us love and we can love people unconditionally. When we love others don't think you are spiritual or greater than others. This love comes from God and is put into our heart by the Holy Ghost. We should only say we have done our duty. We believed in God and in his Word. This was our duty. We only did our duty in believing God's word, obeying God's word, and loving others unconditionally.

Romans 5:5, *"And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."*

Luke 17:11-19

I've read this before and thought that the Lord Jesus expressed disappointment with the nine who did not return to give thanks. This time, however, when I read about the ten lepers it struck me that the Lord Jesus used this as a lesson for his disciples. He pointed out to the disciples that the Samaritan had faith and returned to give thanks. This was not the only time the Lord Jesus made a big deal out of a Gentile who showed faith, or love, or thanksgiving. The Lord taught his disciples that the gospel was for the Jew first but it was also for the Gentiles. The church the Lord Jesus built was not only for Israel but also for whoever would believe. It was not just for the elect in Israel but for whoever would believe.

This reminds me of another scripture in Revelation 22:17, *"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."*

I am glad the Lord Jesus died on the cross for all people and not just for a limited group of elect people. The Lord Jesus died so that anyone who would believe the gospel could be saved. Just like Moses lifted up the bronze snake in the desert and everyone who looked were saved so also today anyone who lifts his eyes to Calvary and believes the good news will be saved.

The good news is simple. Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures. He was buried, and he rose again the third day, according to the scriptures. Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

Acts 16:30-31, *"And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."*

Luke 17:20-25

The religious leaders wanted the Lord Jesus to tell them when the kingdom of God would come. This was a common teaching based on Old Testament scriptures about God's relationship with Israel and the prophecies about the land of Israel, about Jerusalem, and about the people of Israel. These prophecies were also about the Messiah who would bring in the kingdom of God upon the earth. The Lord Jesus never said these prophecies were already fulfilled or would not be fulfilled exactly as they understood the scripture. Instead, he told the religious leaders that the kingdom of God was then presently among

them. The King was there with them. He also told his disciples they would long for one of the days of the Son of Man. Those who knew him and knew he was the Messiah would go through a period of waiting before he returned in the fullness of his kingdom. His disciples repeated this question again in the first chapter of the book of Acts. The Lord said God has a plan of his own regarding the kingdom. What no one seemed to understand was this intermission of the church age.

The Lord Jesus said before the fullness of the kingdom arrived that he would be rejected by that generation and would suffer. The scripture prophesied of a suffering Messiah and also of the Messiah who would return in victory to establish his kingdom. The gospels in the New Testament describe the suffering Messiah. The book of Revelation gives us a glimpse of the Lord Jesus who will return to bring his kingdom upon earth. We still wait for the day of the Lord's return. Many people in the church today, including myself, believe the Lord's return for his people is not far away. It is near to us. The day of the Lord draws close to us. Are we ready? Are we prepared for the appearance of God's kingdom? The Lord Jesus is coming back.

May the Lord help us to wake up to the day in which we are living. May the Lord fulfill his word and return to his people.

Luke 17:26-32

The Lord Jesus describes "the days of the Son of man".

This was a description of the last days before the Lord's return. How did the Lord describe it? He described people living completely for self with no thought to eternity. The world was described as completely self-absorbed like in the days of Noah and Lot. The world was surrendered to self. No one thought of eternity. No one thought of God. Everyone was obsessed with their own lives.

I've heard people say the days of Noah and the days of Lot refer to sexual immorality or it refers to supernatural events in those days but in the context of scripture the interpretation is simple. The days of Noah and the days of Lot meant that people were given to self worship. They were absorbed in their own lives with no thought about God or eternity. This is how the world will be when the Lord Jesus comes back.

The Lord says, "Remember Lot's wife." What does this mean? Lot's wife was not concerned so much with God's wrath upon sin as she was her own life in Sodom and Gomorrah. She looked back to her busy life and preoccupation with self. She wanted to go back to making money, she wanted to go back to enjoying life, she wanted to go back to business as usual. She did not want to think about or believe in the end of the world or God's wrath. She was an example of the carnal person who gave no thought to God or eternity.

This is the world when the Lord Jesus returns. It will be given to its own pleasure, business, and opinions. It thinks of self, business, marriage, and vacations. It is a life lived for self.

How are we living? Do we live only for self? Do we give any thought to the Lord or his return or his kingdom?

Luke 17:33-37

Was the Lord Jesus talking about the rapture? One shall be taken and the other left. He may be teaching about the rapture of the church. He might be pointing to something else. One thing we can learn from this, however, is that there is a time coming when a separation is made.

The Lord separated people into two groups. We already see the two groups throughout the Bible and Jesus taught about two groups. He taught about wise and foolish virgins. He taught about people who were taken and people who were left. He taught about a separation between people.

The Lord Jesus is God's word. He divides those who love the truth and those who do not love the truth.

Hebrews 4:12, *"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."*

The Lord said he divided people even close relatives and people in families.

Luke 12:51, *"Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather **division**:"*

John 7:43, *"So there was a **division** among the people because of him."*

John 10:19, *"There was a **division** therefore again among the Jews for these sayings."*

The Lord Jesus **divides** people. There are sheep. There are goats. There is wheat. There are tares.

A great **division** will come upon the earth in the last days. Those who love the Lord will be separated from those who love self. Those who walk in the truth will be separated from those who walk in lies. Those who walk in the light are taken from those who walk in darkness.

Those who love their life and seek to save their life will lose it. Those who give up their life for the Lord Jesus shall preserve it for eternity.

Pray And Don't Give Up – Luke Chapter 18

Luke 18:1-8

The Lord Jesus taught us to pray and not give up. He told a story about a widow in a city who pestered an ungodly judge to grant her justice. He eventually helped her but not because he feared God or cared about man but because of her persistence. She wore him down. The Lord Jesus said for us to be persistent in prayer. God is not unjust. He will hear our prayers and will answer our prayers. He will take care of what pertains to our life. The Lord Jesus wondered if when the Son of Man came would he find faith on the earth?

I will never forget what a brother in Christ told me. He told me to stay in the word and to stay in prayer. This simple statement stuck with me because of its simplicity, and also because of how profound this

really is in the life of a Christian. If we will just continue to read God's word. If we will just continue to seek the Lord in prayer every day. But we are distracted. But we say we don't have time. Or we would rather do other things. The world, the flesh, and the devil conspire to constantly pull us away from this one simple duty: stay in the word, and stay in prayer.

How different my life might have been if I had simply prayed about everything. If I had just waited on God, and prayed, and refused to be moved by things happening in my life, but instead trusted in God for answers. I was so impatient in life. So impatient with people, and jobs, and churches, and pastors, and friends. So impatient. I did not persevere.

The Lord asked us to persevere in prayer. If we continue in prayer and don't give up then it won't be so easy to give up in life either. By staying in prayer we will stay in life, as well.

Don't give up! Men should always pray and not give up.

Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again on the third day. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

Luke 18:9-14

The purpose of the parable was provided for us right at the beginning. The Lord Jesus told us that this parable was for certain people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others. This was the warning to us. Do we think we are righteous? Does this attitude lead us to despise other people and make us think we are better than other people? I think this is a real danger.

In the parable the man who humbled himself returned to his house justified before God. God gives grace and mercy and forgiveness to the humble. God gives grace to the humble. However, God always opposes the proud. The self righteous man will be condemned.

We should search our hearts and ask the Lord to show us if we are self righteous and proud. Let us ask the Lord to help us, correct us, and show us how we truly are so we can repent of any pride, or any self righteous attitude.

Do not trust your own evaluation of yourself. Ask the Lord to show you who you are. Ask the Lord to search your heart and life and help you humble yourself under his mighty hand.

The Lord will answer this prayer. He will convict us of sin, and righteousness, and judgment. He will reveal to us our true condition and will show us the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The only hope we have is in what Christ Jesus accomplished for us upon Calvary. Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day from the tomb.

All our righteousness is filthy rags. But through the work which the Lord Jesus accomplished he provided his own righteousness for us. He covered us with his righteousness. Put your faith today in the Lord Jesus for salvation, for mercy, for the forgiveness of sins. Ask the Lord to wash you and cleanse you in the blood of the Lamb.

Do not exalt yourself. Never list your good works to God or to man as proof of your righteousness. Turn to the Lord in humility, and say, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner."

Luke 18:15-17

The disciples did not want people to bring their children to the Lord Jesus. However, the Lord had a different attitude about children. He said "of such is the kingdom of God". There was something about children that reminded the Lord Jesus of God's kingdom. What was it? What was it about children that reminded the Lord Jesus about the kingdom of God?

One characteristic might be humility. Most children have a humble attitude. They know they are dependent upon others, their parents, their families. They are ready to receive help and provision from others. They know they are not able to make it on their own. They don't even try. They just simply trust that their needs will be taken care of. They trust in the love of parents and family to provide for them. This is a humble attitude. They know they are not self sufficient.

Another quality of children is innocence. They are not yet tainted by the world. They are not jaded or cynical or suspicious yet. They have not learned hate and distrust. Instead, children will come right up to strangers. Children have to be warned and taught not to talk to strangers. Why? Because they do not yet know about evil. They are innocent. They simply believe and trust in other people.

This is how it will be in God's kingdom. We will simply rely upon our heavenly Father to provide for us and we will be innocent. We will no longer be afraid of other people. Everyone who lives in God's kingdom will love one another in simplicity.

When you look at small children you get a glimpse of how it will be when we live in God's kingdom. Children are precious to the Lord Jesus.

Luke 18:18-30

A rich man asked the Lord Jesus how to get eternal life. Notice that when the Lord Jesus gave the law to people it was usually because the person did not ask an honest question or they were proud.

In this case the Lord Jesus said something interesting before he gave the man God's law. He asked the man why he called Jesus good? He said that no one was good save God. Did the Lord Jesus deny his deity by this statement? I do not think so. Instead, he was challenging what the man said. Is this man calling Jesus God?

The Lord Jesus quoted the commandments for the man who claimed that he kept all of these commandments from his youth up. The Lord Jesus doesn't contradict him but pointed out that he still loved his money more than God. The Lord Jesus told him to give up his riches and then follow him. The man could not do it. This man would rather hold onto money than inherit eternal life.

The fact this man went away sad proved he was not sincere in his question. This was why the Lord Jesus gave him the law. To confront him with the fact that he was not honest. A person who was truly

honest and asked this question would obey what the Lord Jesus said. But the man was not genuine about knowing how to inherit eternal life. This was just a religious question, like a student in a classroom might ask a teacher. He did not really expect the teacher to press him into personal application of the truth.

The Lord presses us today toward obedience. Faith leads us to practical obedience to the Lord. When we are saved we obey the Lord. We hear his voice, receive his word, and walk in obedience. Obedience and bearing fruit is the evidence of a man with a heart that is like the good soil which receives the seed of God's word. The fruit of obedience is the proof we truly desire to inherit eternal life.

Don't ask the Lord a question unless you want to obey what he says. If he speaks and you do not obey you only bring more condemnation on yourself. It is better not to have known the way of righteousness than to know it and turn away from it. I'm so sad for the people I knew who had the truth but turned away. They turned back to the world, like Demas, who loved the world more than he loved the truth.

Money is a big stumbling block for people. There are also other things which stop people from obeying the Lord Jesus. Only you and the Lord know what the hindrance is in your life. Humble yourself today, ask the Lord to help you overcome anything in your life which stops you from obeying him. Obeying the Lord is the most important thing you can do. Nothing else matters. Obey the Lord!

Luke 18:31-34

The Lord Jesus gave his disciples a clear prophecy of what would happen to him. He told them explicitly that they would go to Jerusalem and that everything written by the prophets about him would be fulfilled. He said he would be delivered to the Gentiles, who would mock him, spitefully treat him, scourge him, and then put him to death. On the third day he would rise again from the dead. This was plain language, descriptive, and to the point. Verse 34 says they understood none of these things.

Why couldn't they understand? The reason was immediately provided in the text: "this saying was hid from them".

How many things do we read in the bible and do not understand? Is it possible the Lord hides things from us in plain view? I think it is possible things can be in plain sight but hidden. This reminds me of the account of how the Lord Jesus walked with two men on the road to Emmaus after his resurrection. The men were disciples of the Lord Jesus and told him about the Lord's death, and the Lord walked right next to them and expounded to them from the scriptures what happened to himself. The Lord taught them that what happened to him was the fulfillment of the scriptures. Yet they did not recognize the Lord Jesus for who he was. Isn't that amazing?

I think we see the same thing happening in the world today. Bible prophecy is fulfilled right before our eyes and most people cannot see it. It is hidden from their eyes. How is this possible?

Because it is spiritual. We can only see and understand spiritual truth by faith. Most people try to understand the Bible with the natural mind but it is only by faith we can understand and see what the Bible says. It is only by the Holy Spirit opening our eyes that we can see and it is only by faith our ears are open to hear his voice.

The Lord Jesus told them that he would die and be resurrected. This was the heart of the gospel. Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again from the dead on the third day. Read 1 Corinthians 15 to see Paul's summary of the gospel and his sermon on resurrection. We need to be reminded of this. Our entire faith as Christians rests upon the supernatural and miraculous work of God in raising his son Jesus Christ from the dead.

This is the living God!

Luke 18:35-43

A blind man was beside the road. When he knew that Jesus passed by he cried out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me." The Lord Jesus commanded the man be brought to him despite the people who tried to stop the blind man. The Lord Jesus heard the cry of this blind man beside the road.

Do you think the Lord knew what this man wanted? Of course he knew but he asked the man anyway. "What do you want me to do for you?"

The man told the Lord Jesus that he wanted his sight. What a simple, beautiful request to ask the Lord.

Immediately the man received his sight and followed the Lord Jesus, glorifying God, and all the people who saw this miracle gave praise to God as well.

The Lord heals. Did he ever stop healing people? My question is this: has the Lord forgotten to be compassionate? Does he ignore the cry of people today for healing? If a man cries out today "Son of David, have mercy" will he be ignored? The Lord has not changed. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. He has never changed. He will never change. He says, I am the Lord, I change not.

Seek And Save The Lost – Luke Chapter 19

Luke 19:1-10

The Lord declared his mission. The Son of man came to seek and to save what was lost.

A publican named Zacchaeus was so small he climbed a tree in order to see the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus saw Zacchaeus and when he spoke to him and invited himself to the publican's house the man instantly repented of his sins. He immediately made a full confession and repented of the life he lived up until that point. This was the amazing thing the Lord Jesus said, "for with God all things are possible."

The Lord made it clear that it was nearly impossible for a rich man to be saved. Yet here we see a rich man who was saved. For with God all things are possible. Never underestimate what God can do with a person's life.

People criticized the Lord Jesus for visiting the house of a sinner. The Lord Jesus, however, said that salvation came to the house of Zacchaeus, because he also was a son of Abraham.

The Lord seeks to save those who are lost. No one is out of God's reach. Whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

It doesn't matter what is the background, education, language, or history. It doesn't matter what family a person comes from. It doesn't matter if someone is poor or rich. It doesn't matter if someone is a man or a woman. The gospel is for everyone.

Matthew 22:9, *"Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage."*

Matthew 28:19, *"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:"*

Revelation 22:17, *"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."*

Christ died for our sins. He was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Luke 19:11-28

This was a parable which taught that when the Lord returned he would call his servants into account. There is a time when the Lord will ask his servants to give account. This truth is repeated by the apostle Paul. He states that we will all stand before the Lord to give an account.

Romans 14:10-12, *"But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."*

The Lord mentioned ten servants in the beginning of the parable but in the parable we only see him dealing in judgment with three of these ten servants. There is a man with a unit of ten, a man with a unit of five, and a man with a unit of one. Each person gave an account. The man with one unit did nothing with what God gave him so when he was judged what he had was taken away and given to the man with ten units. There is a brief protest by someone who says, "Lord, he has ten!" Interesting interruption, as though there were people there who thought that the Lord was unjust. The last people to be judged were killed because they did not want the Lord to be a ruler over them.

We may not understand every detail of this parable but overall we can see clearly the Lord did call his servants to account for their service. As Christians this should make us zealous to live each day with our heart set upon pleasing the Lord and investing in what will count in eternity.

Are we bearing fruit for God? Do our lives bear the fruit of good works which bring glory to God? We will one day give account for our life. Do not waste your life on what will not count for eternity.

Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

Luke 19:29-44

The Lord gave instructions to his disciples on how to get a donkey for him to ride into Jerusalem. The Lord provided transportation but included his disciples in what he did. This was seen when the Lord Jesus fed the multitudes. He included his disciples in the distribution. The Lord did the work but allowed us to participate with him in the work. The Lord Jesus entered Jerusalem in this manner was fulfillment of bible prophecy. The crowds recognized the significance and the religious leaders recognized what it meant. The religious leaders opposed the Lord Jesus. The Lord said to them, "If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out."

The Lord Jesus mourned for Jerusalem as he entered the city. He prophesied what would happen to them after his death and resurrection. In AD 70 Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans as the Lord Jesus said would happen.

Bible prophecy was fulfilled in the triumphal entry of the Lord Jesus into Jerusalem. The Lord predicted what would happen in AD 70. What bible prophecy do we see happening today? What bible prophecies are yet to be fulfilled?

The Lord Jesus will return to earth. He will set foot on the mount of Olives as he did in this account. He will establish himself as king over all the nations of the earth. I am looking forward to this kingdom of God on earth. May the Lord return quickly!

The Lord Jesus gave himself upon Calvary for our sins. He was buried in a tomb, and three days later rose from the dead. He appeared to his disciples and to 500 people at one time. Many of the people who followed Jesus and saw him after his resurrection were willing to die for their faith in him. He is the Messiah. He is the Christ. He is King of kings and Lord of lords.

1 Corinthians 15:1-8, *"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that **Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:** And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time"*

Luke 19:45-48

The Lord Jesus went into the temple and cast out all those were selling and buying. He quoted the scripture which stated that his house was a house of prayer but they made it a den of thieves. The Lord Jesus taught people daily at the temple and though the religious leaders wanted to destroy him they could not figure out how to do it. All the people were attentive to hear the Lord Jesus.

Our body is now the temple of the Holy Spirit. We are to offer our bodies to the Lord as a living sacrifice for the Lord Jesus. We are not to allow sin to reign in our bodies. Reading through Romans 6 will help us to understand that we have the victory over sin and no longer need to yield ourselves to sin, but instead yield our bodies to God to be an instrument of righteousness.

Also, Paul taught about self-control in 1 Thessalonians 4:4, *"That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor."*

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, *"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."*

Self-control is also listed as a fruit of the Holy Spirit. Galatians 5:22-24, *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. 24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."*

Have we asked the Lord Jesus into our heart? Then he has entered the temple of our body. Do not let him find any sin, but rather let the temple be a house of prayer. Amen.

Jesus Is Examined – Luke Chapter 20

Luke 20:1-8

The religious leaders challenged the Lord Jesus and asked him where he received his authority. Where did he get his religious license? Where was his diploma for finishing bible college?

This was an interesting question and revealed a lot about man's nature. Men naturally assume there is authority given to man from somewhere. Often this authority is given to men through some kind of man-made political, business, or religious structure. If you jump through the right hoops in religious institutions then you receive a piece of paper which says you have the right to preach. The amazing thing about this process is that it really does work. People believe in this process. You are accepted by men if you follow the system.

Is it possible that men who are not even saved can make it through this system and become religious leaders and not know God personally? It is not only possible but it is probable that this happens all the time. What else could explain the condition of modern religious institutions?

The Lord's answer put the question back into the lap of the religious leaders. The authority of these religious leaders for a great part relied upon the support of the people in the crowd. In other words, if the common man stopped believing in the authority of the religious leaders then they would no longer hold power. Most religious leaders only have power as long as they hold onto their prestige. As long as they receive the praise of men they hold onto their positions.

However, the people were convinced that John the Baptist was a prophet. John the Baptist was a martyr for righteousness. The common man believed this. When the Lord Jesus asked the religious leaders where John the Baptist got his authority he put them in a no-win position. If they acknowledged that John was a prophet then they would be challenged as to why they refused to believe in him and be baptized by him. However, if they denied John the Baptist then they would lose the support of the crowd. As a result, they could not answer the Lord's question. And so he said he would not answer their question either.

The Lord could have answered their question. He could have said that God the Father gave him his authority. But instead he turned the tables on them and caused men to consider what authority these phony religious leaders had over them!

We submit to authority but as the Lord Jesus warned we should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy. We can respect positions which people hold but do not believe everything men say just because he stands behind a pulpit or has a diploma. Instead, we are to be like the Bereans and search the scriptures daily for ourselves. The Holy Spirit is here to lead and guide us into all truth.

Obeys, respect, and love your leaders. Pray for them. But be wary of them as well. The best of men are only men at best.

Luke 20:9-18

The Lord Jesus told a parable to the religious leaders about a certain man who planted a vineyard. The man planted the vineyard and then leased it to some people who were supposed to take care of it for him. The owner of the vineyard eventually sent someone to collect the fruit from the vineyard from those he left to take care of it. However, the people he left in charge were not interested in giving the fruit to the owner. Instead, they beat and threw out anyone the owner of the vineyard sent to collect fruit. Eventually the owner sent his own son to collect fruit but those who managed the vineyard killed the son so they could steal his inheritance.

The Lord Jesus asked the religious leaders a question: "What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?"

The answer: he shall come and destroy the husbandmen and give the vineyard to others.

Then the Lord Jesus quoted a prophecy from the bible to make his point that this parable applied to the situation at hand: "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner"

The religious leaders persecuted and killed all of God's prophets who were sent to them. Israel rejected their Messiah. As a result, God's judgment fell upon the people of Israel and they were scattered all over the world for 2,000 years.

The only reason why we see Israel back in the land today is because God will fulfill his word and the Lord Jesus Christ will return to earth again. This time he will come to save the nation of Israel from the worst holocaust in history. The time of Jacob's trouble is right around the corner but the Lord Jesus himself will save them out of it. All Israel will be saved, according to the scripture.

The stone which they rejected became the cornerstone. The Lord Jesus is the cornerstone. Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. Whoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken, but on whomever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

Luke 20:19-26

The religious leaders planned to kill the Lord Jesus after he told a parable against them. They sent spies to trap him in his words so they could have something to accuse him and hand him over to the Roman government to be put to death.

One of these questions had to do with paying taxes. The spies knew the people hated to pay taxes to Caesar so they wanted to get the crowd to turn on the Lord Jesus or if the Lord Jesus said don't pay taxes then they could turn the Romans against Jesus. Either way they thought they could trap the Lord Jesus.

However, the Lord Jesus turned the entire trap upside down on them. He asked for a coin, and then asked them whose image was on the coin. They said the image on the coin was Caesar. The Lord Jesus said to give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar. But give to God what belongs to God. What did he mean by this?

In Genesis it is written that man is made in the image of God. If man therefore has the image of God upon him then he must belong to God. The Lord Jesus by telling them to give to Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's made a contrast between a worthless coin with the image of a man on it and the infinite value of a man who is made in the image of God.

He exposed to everyone that the people who asked him this question put their value in worthless money, but that those who truly love God gave him their whole lives. The Lord Jesus answered their question and rebuked them at the same time. To say they were shocked and confounded by the reply of the Lord Jesus would be an understatement. This question, meant to trap the Lord Jesus, only made the Lord Jesus more godly and righteous. Every trap they set only trapped themselves.

One practical application of this is that Christians should pay taxes to whatever government they are under. The Lord Jesus did not teach rebellion against authority. We should never take part in any kind of rebellion against government if there is any way possible. There may be extreme circumstances where Christians may be called to resist government, but those cases are rare in history. See also Romans chapter 13.

Luke 20:27-38

The Sadducees asked the Lord Jesus a question concerning marriage and the resurrection. They posed a hypothetical question to him about a wife whose husband died and so his brother was supposed to marry her. But all the seven brothers died. Now who would she be married to in the resurrection? The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection.

The Lord Jesus revealed some interesting truth in response to this question. He said people in this world given in marriage. But in the world that will be in the future people will not be married but are like angels. They do not die anymore so there is no reason to be married in that world which is to come. Then the Lord Jesus proved there is life after death by quoting the scripture that said that the Lord is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is not the God of the dead but of the living for all are alive to him.

The Lord Jesus firmly stated there is life after death. There is resurrection. There will be life after this present one. How should we then live? Are we to live only for this present life? Should we not be thinking ahead and investing in the world which is to come?

The Lord taught us to seek first the kingdom of God. The Lord taught us to lay up our treasures in heaven. Where our treasures are there will be our heart also. How do we do this?

One way to do this is to live each day expecting the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. We should keep in mind the fact that we will give an account to the Lord for our life here on earth. We should look for ways to invest our time and energy into what will truly count for eternity.

What will count in eternity? God's word endures forever. Also, the souls of men and women. How are we reaching others with the gospel? Are we praying for people? Are we living a life which is salt and light?

There will be a resurrection. The Bible makes it clear. Death is not the end. It is appointed unto man to die once and then afterwards to face judgment and account with our creator.

The only hope anyone will have then is to be saved now. We are saved by putting our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. Christ died for our sins. He was buried and rose again on the third day. Call upon the name of the Lord. Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near. Today is the day of salvation.

Luke 20:39-47

The religious leaders finally had no more questions to ask the Lord Jesus. The Lord asked them a question about the Messiah as the son of David. How could David call his own son "Lord"? How can a father call his son "Lord"? The only explanation, which the religious would not believe, was that the son of David would also be the Son of God. He was the Son of man and he was the Son of God. The Lord Jesus is the God-Man. Fully God. Fully man. No one could reply to the question which Jesus asked.

The Lord Jesus told his disciples and the public to beware of the religious leaders. He said they desire to walk in long robes, love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts. They had the highest positions in the business world, the religious world, and in society. The only area they did not control was government which was controlled by the Romans.

The Lord Jesus said the leaders of business, religion, and society devoured widow's houses. How did they do this? I don't know the details but in some way they oppressed the poor. They took from the

poor and gave to the rich. Has the world changed any since then? No, it is the same today as it was then.

The Lord Jesus said the leaders will receive "greater" damnation. So there are degrees of punishment in hell? The higher your position in this world the greater your punishment will be in hell. The more influence and power a man has in this world the greater the chance he will suffer more in hellfire. With greater power comes greater responsibility and accountability.

We will give an account to God one day. Make sure you have received the Lord Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior before you leave this planet. Don't die without receiving the gift of eternal life through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Watch and Pray – Luke Chapter 21

Luke 21:1-4

The Lord Jesus observed people putting their gifts into the treasury for the temple. A lot of rich people put in donations but a poor widow put in two mites. The Lord Jesus told everyone that she put in more than everyone because she donated her entire living but the rich only gave only a little out of their abundance.

The Lord observed what people put in the offering plate. He saw the attitude and heart behind what they gave in the offering plate. This reminds me of the story of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts. They lost their lives because they gave to the church with deceit in their heart. They tried to lie to the Holy Spirit. You cannot lie to God.

This reminds me of what Jesus said about not letting your left hand know what your right hand gives. We should not give in front of people to receive praise from men. If we do then we have received our reward. God will not reward people who give only to be seen by men. We should not look for the praise of men but the praise of God.

The Lord Jesus praised this widow. She put in everything she had. But those who had so much gave very little. This is a perfect picture of human nature in action. The rich do little to help others. But it is the poor who give their last dollar to help someone else. I've seen this in action in my life. The humble poor person will give everything they have to help others out of love. But the rich will do as little as they can get away with and justify their hard hearts with excuses.

The Lord sees it all. He knows who gives and who does not give. He knows why people give and why they do not give. The Lord loves a cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians 9:7, *"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."*

Luke 21:5-19

Some tried to draw the Lord's attention to the temple but he told them the time would come when there would not be one stone left upon another and that all the stones of the temple would be thrown down.

They asked the Lord Jesus when these things would happen and what sign would there be that these things should come to pass.

The first sign the Lord Jesus warned about was deception. He said we should be on our guard and not be deceived. Many would come in the name of Christ proclaiming the end of the world. The Lord Jesus said do not follow these people. He said there would be wars and commotions but don't be terrified. These things must happen but the end was not yet. He said nation would rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. There would be earthquakes in different places, and famines, and pestilences, and fearful sights and great signs from heaven. Before that they would be persecuted.

What is the purpose of persecution? The Lord said persecution would turn out to be a testimony for Christians. The Lord taught us to settle in our heart not to meditate what we would answer but trust God to give us wisdom at that time which our enemy would not be able to resist.

The Lord Jesus predicted family members would betray one another and cause some to be put to death. Christians would be hated by all men because they belong to Christ and proclaim the name of Jesus Christ.

The word the Lord Jesus gave us for these end times was patience. In your patience possess your souls. We are to be patient, endure, and walk one day at a time by faith in the Lord Jesus.

This sermon regarding the end time continues in the following verses but we will pause for now here at verse 19 with the Lord's command for us: "In your patience possess ye your souls."

James 1:2-4, *"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; 3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."*

Romans 5:3-5, *"And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."*

James 5:7-8, *"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."*

2 Thessalonians 3:5, *"And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ."*

Luke 21:20-28

The Lord Jesus described an attack upon Jerusalem which would result in the destruction of the city. This happened in AD 70. It will happen again during the great tribulation when the Antichrist enters the temple and declares himself to be a god. The Lord Jesus warned that the Jewish people in Jerusalem should flee when they see armies coming. He called these times the days of vengeance. The Lord Jesus described what would happen before it happened so that when it took place we would know that God is in control of everything.

He said that Jerusalem would be trodden down by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles would be fulfilled. There will come a specific time in historical future when the rule of Gentile nations will come to an end. This will happen at the end of the tribulation when the Lord Jesus will return and set up his kingdom upon this earth. This was also described by the prophet Daniel when he said a stone made without hands would destroy the image of the earthly kingdoms and establish a kingdom that would endure forever.

We know what the Lord Jesus was describing here not only applies to AD 70 and the Roman destruction of Jerusalem but also the last days events when he went on to describe signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars. He described distress of nations and perplexity. Men's hearts would fail them for fear because of the things coming upon the earth and that the powers of heaven would be shaken.

He said men would literally see Jesus Christ return in a cloud with power and great glory. The Lord Jesus prophesied his own second return to planet earth.

In verse 28 he said, *"And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."*

We should lift up our heads right now. There are multiplied signs taking place in our present day. We should be earnestly looking for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord will return for his people soon. Lift up your eyes as the sun rises; the Lord returns for his people.

Luke 21:29-38

The Lord Jesus told them a parable about a fig tree. Many people interpret this fig tree as the nation of Israel. When Israel became a nation again in 1948 the fig tree shot forth and so we can know summer is near at hand. When we see this we know the kingdom of God is near. Then the Lord Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled." Many take this to mean that the generation living during the time when Israel became a nation again in 1948 will not pass away until the Lord Jesus returns. If this interpretation is correct then we are right on the threshold of the rapture of the church, the tribulation, and the arrival of God's kingdom on this earth.

The Lord Jesus warned that in the days before the appearance of the kingdom of God we would need to watch and pray always. He seemed to make a distinction here between believers who watched and prayed and those who do not. Those who watch and pray would be counted worthy to escape something that would come upon the entire world. What else could this be but the tribulation period

described in the book of Revelation? We can conclude that in order to escape the tribulation we must be saved, and not only saved, but living for the Lord Jesus by watching and praying. Part of watching and praying means to avoid surfeiting, drunkenness, and the cares of life. If we are surfeiting, drunk or consumed with this life then this "snare" will come upon us unawares. Instead, we should pray and watch so we can be counted worthy to escape what will come upon the earth.

This particular interpretation seems to imply a partial rapture of believers, but actually I don't believe in a partial rapture. I believe if you are truly a born again believer in Jesus then you watch and pray. But there are a lot of religious people in church today who profess they know God but who live just like the world. These people will be left behind, because they don't really have a relationship with the Lord Jesus, because they don't really have a relationship with the Lord Jesus. They are just church goers. Those people who convince themselves they are right with God because they believe a bible doctrine but don't really have an active, personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart and shine the light on any delusion or deception in your life. Don't wait until it is too late and then discover you lied to yourself the whole time.

This message is not necessarily for people in the world because there is no doubt they will be left behind. This message is for people within the household of faith especially for those walking in the flesh and not obeying God's word. They are deceived. God wants to wake them up to their true condition so they do not perish along with the rest of the world. I would say they are really not Christians, but just religious church goers. However, they do have enough truth and light that they will know what happened whereas the world won't have a clue.

Does the Lord know you? Does he know your name? How do you know the Lord knows who you are today?

Whosoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again from the dead on the third day, according to the scriptures.

Judas Betrayed Jesus – Luke Chapter 22

Luke 22:1-6

Sooner or later people will show their true colors. Judas was one of the twelve apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ and yet he was not a true believer. He was part of the church, part of ministry, and the whole time faked it. Time will reveal the true nature of a man. For the true man of God time makes his light shine brighter. But the man who was a phony time will reveal the darkness in his soul. This was the case for Judas Iscariot. The end game of his life was betraying the Son of God and killing himself.

What is in my heart today? Do I love the Lord Jesus more today than I did yesterday? Will I continue to follow the Lord Jesus even if he goes to Jerusalem and dies on a cross? Will I continue to follow the Lord Jesus even when I do not understand what he is doing? What if he leads me into the valley of the shadow of death? Will I continue to trust in him? Or will I get angry? Will I get mad and give place to

the devil? The Bible says here: "Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve." How is this possible?

Judas gave place to the devil. The disciples did not understand what the Lord Jesus planned when he went back to Jerusalem. They did not understand what he meant when he said he would be handed over to the Gentiles and crucified and rise from the dead. If the disciples did not understand this what kept them following the Lord Jesus? Why did they keep following the Lord Jesus? Even though they did not understand they trusted the Lord Jesus. They could not grasp his purpose but they trusted him. They knew he was the Son of God. But Judas was different. For some reason Judas did not trust the Lord Jesus. There was something about the Lord Jesus that was beyond his reach. He could not understand the Lord Jesus and he did not trust him. He was easy prey for Satan.

Satan entered Judas and then Judas went straight to the enemies of the Lord Jesus. Judas "communed" with the chief priests and the captains how he might betray the Lord Jesus. The enemies of the Lord Jesus were glad and agreed to give him money.

May God help us! Do you think you love the Lord? Do you think you are too spiritual to ever do what Judas did here?

1 Corinthians 10:12, *"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."*

Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak. Pray and watch yourself. Continue to walk with the Lord. Examine yourself and make sure you are in the faith. Remember to abide in the gospel. Hold fast the form of sound words.

Luke 22:7-13

The Lord Jesus sent Peter and John to prepare an upper room for the Lord and his disciples to celebrate the Passover. I've often wondered why the instructions the Lord Jesus gave to Peter and John seem mysterious. It almost reads like something from a spy novel. "When you enter the city there shall a man meet you bearing a pitcher of water. Follow him to the house he enters." These are the kind of instructions which spies receive in war time. Then I realized when I read this that the nature of these instructions was mysterious on purpose. The Lord knew Judas looked for an opportunity to betray him. He needed to organize this last supper with his disciples in a way Judas did not know beforehand where they would be so that this last supper would not be interrupted.

I remember reading some of the testimonies of Christians living in persecuted countries that they had to resort to this kind of activity in order to avoid detection from the government when they held their church services and meetings.

The disciples went and found everything as the Lord Jesus instructed them. They prepared the upper room and made everything ready for the Passover celebration for the Lord Jesus and his disciples.

Notice how the Lord involved his disciples in his work and his ministry. The Lord knows everything and is able to do all things, yet he allows us to be part of the work of the ministry. He allows us an opportunity to serve and be a part of his plans and his purpose.

The big picture here is that the Lord has a kingdom. He looks for disciples who will work with him in that kingdom. Do you want to be a part of that kingdom work? A day will come when the Lord Jesus returns to the earth and establishes his kingdom over all the nations. Only those who followed the Lord in this life will have an opportunity to serve him in that kingdom.

How do we get ready? Believe the gospel today. The Lord Jesus died on the cross for our sins. He was buried in a tomb. On the third day he rose from the dead. Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved. Now that you are saved love the Lord with all of your heart. Invest your life in what will truly count for eternity. Stay in God's word and stay in prayer. Obey the Lord and his commandments. Become an overcomer in Christ Jesus by abiding in the gospel and overcoming self, sin, the world, and the devil. Be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Luke 22:14-23

The Lord sat down with the twelve apostles for his last supper with them. This was the Jewish Passover meal but during this meal it became something else. It was the inauguration of the Christian communion tradition. Here we see the Lord took bread and a cup and shared it with his disciples. He said the bread represented his body which was given for us. He said to eat the bread in remembrance of him. He did the same with the cup. He said the cup was the new testament in his blood which was shed for us. The Lord Jesus gave his body and his blood for us.

He followed this with a startling announcement about a traitor among the twelve apostles. Each one of the disciples inquired among themselves which of them it was that would do this thing. No one realized that Judas was the traitor at that moment.

As it was the last supper so it is today. We still have people in the church who really do not know the Lord like Judas. They take the bread and the cup of communion and yet do not know the Lord Jesus Christ personally. They have never put their personal faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.

The apostle Paul reminded us of communion in 1 Corinthians 11:23-28. Interesting, Paul also associated the last supper with the betrayal of Judas as well. *"That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread..."*

This reminds me of Psalm 23:5, *"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."*

Our Christian lives are not lived in a safe space. We live our Christian life in the midst of our enemies every day. The Lord Jesus showed this in the last supper. In the most intimate moment he shared between himself and his disciples there was a devil sitting at the table with him.

Don't be afraid of the enemy. The enemy was defeated by the Lord Jesus Christ at Calvary. He looked into the eyes of his enemy and he overcame him. Because the Lord Jesus overcame we also who abide in him have overcome as well. We are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Luke 22:24-30

During the Lord's last supper the disciples had an argument over who they thought was the greatest among the disciples. This was an ongoing conversation throughout the ministry of the Lord Jesus and was a topic he confronted them on more than once.

Again, the Lord repeated his teaching that the greatest among them would be like a child and the chief among them would be the one who served. The Lord Jesus taught them this by his own example of being there to serve them. In John's gospel we see that he humbled himself and washed their feet at this last supper. The Lord Jesus gave us the example of what was great in God's kingdom. Humility and being a servant qualified one for greatness in the kingdom of God.

The Lord never rebuked people for wanting to be great but he helped us understand greatness from God's point of view was opposite from our human point of view. The world system is opposite from the kingdom of God.

The Lord Jesus made the contrast between the world system they understood. He taught them that what the world considered great is opposite of what God considered great.

The fact this was an issue with the disciples even up until the last moments of the Lord's earthly ministry should give pause. Let us consider if this is not a huge deal in the life of the believer. We are so brain washed by the world system we live in. We never give it a thought that perhaps our covetous attitude toward position and prestige is completely against God's kingdom. We seek to make a name for ourselves and exalt ourselves over other people. And yet, all the while the Lord looks at us across the table and patiently repeats his teaching again and again. If you want to be great then humble yourself and be a servant. Do not exalt yourself over brothers and sisters in Christ. Do not seek to make a name for yourself. Instead, let your goal be to make the name of the Lord Jesus Christ great and glorious.

2 Chronicles 29:13, *"Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name."*

Psalms 66:2, *"Sing forth the honor of his name: make his praise glorious."*

Psalms 72:19, *"And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen."*

Let us make the name of the Lord great and glorious. He is only one who is worthy to be called "The Greatest".

Luke 22:31-38

The Lord Jesus warned Peter he would deny him three times. The Lord knew Satan wanted to sift Peter as wheat was sifted. However, the Lord Jesus told Peter he prayed for him that his faith would not fail but when he recovered would strengthen his brothers. This happened exactly as the Lord Jesus said it would happen. The Lord's prayers were answered for Peter. We have the letters of First and Second Peter as a testimony of the Lord's answered prayers for Peter. He did strengthen his brothers. He did recover his faith and he never forgot the word the Lord told him.

Later, Peter would warn other Christians about this enemy, Satan, or the devil.

1 Peter 5:8, *"Be sober; be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."*

Peter learned not to put confidence in himself but instead to be sober minded and vigilant. Watch unto prayer. The spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak. We cannot defeat the enemy in our own strength but in the power of the Lord Jesus we can resist the devil and he will flee from us. Submit yourselves then to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

Notice Peter's first reaction to the Lord's warning was to deny what the Lord Jesus said. This should be a first indication as to what would shortly follow. If you dismiss God's word don't be surprised if you betray or deny him later on. We need to listen to what God's word says to us. We need to be sober and vigilant. We need to take heed to what God's word says to us right now. Do not think of yourselves more highly than you ought to think but instead think soberly. Do not underestimate your flesh or the power of darkness to deceive you and cause you to do things you never imagined you would do.

We need to always call upon the name of the Lord and put on the full armor of God and prepare to endure the hour of darkness. It will not last forever. Can we endure? Can we stay alert and pray during the hour of darkness?

Temptation will come. May God help us to stay awake and alert and put no confidence in ourselves or in our own flesh. Instead may the Lord help us to humble ourselves and to think soberly and to not think of ourselves more highly than we should. Let us think soberly and be vigilant and watch unto prayer.

Luke 22:39-46

The Lord Jesus knew everything happening behind the scenes with Judas. He went to the mount of Olives where he knew Judas would also know where he went. The Lord Jesus exhorted his disciples to pray that they enter not into temptation. Then he himself went into deep, agonizing prayer. The Lord Jesus prayed so hard he sweat as it were drops of blood. An angel appeared and strengthened the Lord Jesus. We are given a glimpse into the words the Lord Jesus prayed here as well: "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."

What a mystery! The Son of God praying for the will of his Father to be done. Yet he is himself God in the flesh. Amazing grace! This is a mystery we will never fully comprehend until we see the Lord Jesus face to face. The Lord Jesus prayed through and walked in victory.

However, the Lord's disciples did not pray like he did. Instead, they slept from sorrow. The Lord Jesus asked them why they slept. He exhorted them to rise and pray so that they would not enter temptation.

Temptation will come into our life. This is a guarantee. However, the Lord taught us through these scriptures that we can overcome temptation if we pray. We can pray and the Lord will give us victory

over the flesh, over sin, over temptation, over the world system, and over the devil. Greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world. No temptation has taken us except what is common to man. God is faithful. He will not allow us to be tempted above what we are able but will with the temptation provide a way to escape.

Our escape is to pray and call upon the name of the Lord. Pray that you enter not into temptation but that you may be delivered from evil. The Lord Jesus taught his disciples to pray this. He is teaching us to pray this. Do not be arrogant and think you can overcome sin, or your flesh, or the world, or the devil in your determination or will power. We will fail every time. But if we will pray and humble ourselves God will give us grace to say "no" to temptation. Say "yes" to the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit will say "no" to temptation for you. Yield yourself to the Lord through prayer. Call upon the name of the Lord.

The name of the Lord is a strong tower, and the righteous run to it and are safe. Are you running to the name of the Lord? Are you calling upon the name of the Lord?

Luke 22:46, *"Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."*

Rise and pray, brothers and sisters in Christ.

Luke 22:47-53

Judas led the enemies of the Lord to his location on the mount of Olives. When he approached he kissed the Lord, which was a signal to those he led that he was the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus asked him if he betrayed him with a kiss. One of the disciples wanted to fight back with his sword and cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest. However, the Lord Jesus stopped him, and then healed the man who lost his ear. The Lord Jesus asked them why they came to arrest him in the night with swords and staves as if he were a thief. He was with them daily in the temple teaching the word. Then the Lord said something that sticks out to me: "This is your hour, and the power of darkness."

Evil does have a day. It is clear from scripture the Lord allowed the devil to do his best and gave him a short period of time to do his evil work. However, this time frame was only an hour. It is a short period of time. It is only for a season. It will not last forever. The power of darkness will not always be allowed.

Weeping may remain for the night, but joy comes in the morning.

Ephesians 6:13, *"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."*

The Lord allowed the enemy one hour. It was a short period of time. We are to endure through the hour of darkness. We are to endure our hour of isolation, our night of confusion, and drink our cup of pain. It will not last forever. Be patient. The coming of the Lord draws near.

Be patient. Endure. God is still on the throne. God is still in control.

Luke 22:54-62

Just as the Lord Jesus told him would happen Peter denied the Lord three times before the rooster crowed.

The Lord Jesus always knew exactly what would happen in their lives. When the Lord speaks to us we should listen and take to heart what he says. If we ignore his word or dismiss his word to us then we are in danger of denying him just like Peter. To dismiss the Lord's word is to dismiss him because you cannot separate the Lord from his word. He is his word and the two cannot be separated. Don't let anyone tell you they have the Lord Jesus but reject the Bible. The Lord and his word are one.

Peter followed afar off. This phrase was symbolic of what happened in Peter's heart as well. Peter could not comprehend the events which unfolded in front of him. He could not turn his back on the Lord right away. Peter was brave and willing to fight but he could not wrap his mind around the Lord giving up and giving in to the enemy like this. He followed from afar.

This situation is repeated in the life of every serious Christian. There will absolutely come a time in your life when you will face confusion. You will not understand what God is doing in your life. Everything will feel like in your life that it is upside down. You will feel like you want to pull out your sword and start slashing but the Lord will tell you to put up the sword and quit fighting.

It reminds me of the scripture in Ephesians 6:13, *"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand"*

This is a similar picture to what Moses told Israel at the Red Sea. The enemy was closing in on them and all they could do is stand still between the Red Sea and certain death.

We begin to see here what Paul talked about in 2 Corinthians 1:9-10, *"But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us"*

Why did Peter deny the Lord? Do you think he was afraid? No, he wasn't afraid. He was ready to cut a man's ear off. Why did he deny the Lord?

He denied the Lord because he no longer understood what the Lord Jesus was doing. Peter thought he had everything figured out, but he didn't. The Lord Jesus did something unexpected (though it should not have been because the Lord Jesus told them what would happen to him). Peter did not understand what the Lord Jesus was doing.

In this moment of confusion he denied the Lord. He denied he knew the Lord because in that moment he really did not know the Lord anymore. He no longer knew the Lord Jesus in that moment. He was overcome by his night of confusion and his hour of isolation.

This is why the Lord Jesus tells us to pray and watch. The time will come when nothing makes sense. Evil, sin, the power of darkness, and the devil will have a chance to attack you. When it comes it will make no sense. Evil and sin never make sense. You cannot understand darkness. It is impenetrable. You cannot understand it.

It is then you must have simple, childlike trust in the Lord Jesus. It is in that hour you must simply say, like Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him". Tell your heart and soul this: "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord".

This confusion will not last forever. The night cannot last forever. The morning will come again. Lift up your eyes as the sun rises. The Lord returns for his people.

Luke 22:63-71

The Lord told his disciples that he would be handed over to the Gentiles and that they would mock him and mistreat him before crucifying him on the cross. This is what we see happening here in these verses. They blindfolded him and struck him in the face and blasphemed. They mocked him and treated him with contempt and blasphemy. This all happened even before his trial.

At his trial the religious leaders asked him if he was the Christ. Take note that the religious leaders were accusing him of being their Messiah. When they found him guilty of making this claim they rejected him. They convicted him of claiming to be the Messiah and completely rejected his claim. The tragedy here was that he was who he said. He is the Messiah. He is the Christ.

What do they say? "What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth." What did they hear? They heard him say that he was Christ.

Is the Lord Jesus the Christ? His resurrection proved that he was who he said he was. The Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead on the third day. He is the Lord, and he is the Christ. He is the Son of God, and he is God the Son. He is King of kings and Lord of lords.

Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again from the dead on the third day. Whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

Crucifixion, Death, and Burial – Luke Chapter 23

Luke 23:1-12

What does everyone in the world have in common? They all hate the Lord Jesus Christ.

Pilate and Herod were enemies until the Lord Jesus Christ came into the picture. Then after both were exposed to the Lord Jesus they found they had something in common. Both hated the Lord Jesus Christ and had contempt for the King of the Jews.

The religious leaders brought the Lord Jesus to Pilate. Some saw Pilate's words as reflecting a moral man who did not want to condemn an innocent man and tried to avoid condemning the Lord Jesus. I don't think Pilate was that way at all. I think Pilate hated the Jews and Pilate perceived that the Jews tried to manipulate him. I think his refusal to condemn the Lord Jesus was not because he was moral or

had a conscience. I think he merely tried to spite the religious leaders. However, he knew when the game was up and eventually gave into the religious leaders after Herod sent the Lord Jesus back to him.

Notice that the Lord Jesus, though he was not sentenced for any crime, suffered terribly. He was beaten, mocked, ridiculed, and was not even officially charged with any crime. This was more than just mere human evil at work. The spiritual powers of darkness energized these people and added fuel to the fire of men's natural evil.

Pilate asked the Lord Jesus if he was the King of the Jews. The Lord Jesus replied to Pilate, but did not give a reply to Herod. I don't think the Lord replied to Pilate because there was hope of Pilate's salvation. I think he replied so that his testimony would be on record. He acknowledged the charge against him from the religious leaders was that he was the King of the Jews and the charge of him being the Christ. This was what the religious leaders charged him with. This was the charge Pilate posted on the cross. This is why they killed him. They killed him because of who he was. He was the Son of God. They killed him because he was the Son of God.

This demonstrated the default hatred in the heart of men against God. Men were not only apathetic toward God. They instinctively hated God and wanted to rid God from the world. They will fail in their hatred. God is King forever. The Lord reigns forever and ever. His kingdom has no end.

Every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2:9-11; Romans 14:11-12

Luke 23:13-25

Pilate stated to the religious leaders that he did not find anything in the Lord Jesus worthy of death. His plan was to chastise the Lord Jesus and let him go. He was able to let him go because of a tradition of releasing a prisoner on this certain day. Instead, the crowd and religious leaders wanted Barabbas released. Barabbas was a murderer. Eventually because of the insistence of the crowd and the religious leaders Pilate gave in to their request to condemn the Lord Jesus. He released him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they desired, and delivered the Lord Jesus Christ to the will of the religious leaders and crowd.

The Lord Jesus took the place of Barabbas. This symbolized how the Lord Jesus took the place of every sinner who ever lived on this earth. The Lord Jesus gave his life upon Calvary for the salvation of sinners. Justice demanded a penalty be paid for sin. The Lord Jesus paid the penalty for our sins in his own blood upon the cross of Calvary. In this way God was just and was also the justifier of those who put their faith in Jesus. The Lord imputed his own righteousness to us when we repent and believe the gospel. This message is so clear and simple that even a child can understand this. Jesus died for us. He was buried in a tomb, and he rose again from the dead on the third day. (1 Corinthians 15:1-4)

The Lord gave his life. A prisoner exchange took place that day. The Lord gave us his life. We must surrender our life to him now. We give up any right we have to our own life, and commit ourselves completely into the hands of God. God loves us so much. We can trust in him with our lives. We can trust in him to accomplish his will, and purpose, and plan in and through our lives.

2 Timothy 1:12, *"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."*

Philippians 1:6, *"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."*

Trust in the Lord today. Cast all of your cares upon him, because he cares for you. He will provide for you, and protect you, and be your portion forever.

Luke 23:26-31

They found a man named Simon, a Cyrenian, to bear the Lord's cross for him. A great crowd followed the Lord Jesus who cried and mourned. The Lord Jesus told them not to cry or mourn for him but to mourn for themselves because of what would come upon them. He spoke of a time in the future when men would ask for the mountains to fall on them and for the hills to cover them. Jesus said if men did these things when the tree was green what would they do when it was dry. This is an interesting question.

My take on this statement about a green tree and a dry tree is that the world then was not yet as sinful and dark as it would become. In those days the world was still fresh and had some life in it. But the closer we get to the end the more the world is dead. We are living in a world that is dry. Jesus described dry places as the haunt of evil spirits. This is what we see happening at the end of all things. The world is no longer fresh and green. It is dry and withered. It is a time when the powers of darkness openly control government, business, and society.

Not much was said about Simon who carried the Lord's cross. However, it reminded me of how often the Lord invited people to take up the cross, and to deny themselves, and to follow him. This was a picture of following Jesus on the road of humility, obedience, worship of God, and denying one's own self and name.

Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

Luke 23:32-43

The Lord was led to Calvary with two other men. These two men were criminals and were crucified one on his left and one on his right. One of the criminals challenged him that if he were truly the Christ to save himself and them as well. However, the other criminal spoke of a fear of God and that he knew he was a sinner. He asked Jesus to remember him when he came into his kingdom. The Lord Jesus promised him that he would be with him that day in paradise. Notice this criminal did not have to do anything but ask for the Lord Jesus to have mercy on him and remember him. He acknowledged that he was a sinner, believed in the Lord Jesus, and asked the Lord to remember him. Salvation is very straight forward. Admit you are a sinner. Believe in the Lord Jesus. Call upon his name. Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

The Lord Jesus prayed for the people who put him on the cross. He asked the Father to forgive them because they did not know what they were doing. Later the apostle Paul stated this in his letters as well. He said if they knew who he was they would not have crucified him. But they did not know. Therefore the Lord Jesus prayed for them that God would have mercy on them and forgive them. At least some of those people were saved, including the criminal who asked Jesus to remember him.

He was mocked by the religious leaders when he was on the cross. They mocked him in the same way as the criminal. They said if he was the Christ then he should save himself and come down from the cross.

The soldiers mocked him and said if he was the king of the Jews that he should save himself.

Do you see a pattern here? The world always talks about saving one's own self. This is the philosophy, religion, and default belief system of everyone in the world system. Save yourself. This is the basis of all of the false religions in the world. Save yourself.

However, the Lord Jesus did not come into this world to save himself. He came into this world to save us. And he did this by staying on the cross and dying for our sins. He was our substitute. He is our atonement. He took our sins upon himself and paid the penalty for the sake of God's justice. Therefore God can be just and he can also justify those who put their faith in the Lord Jesus.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ today and you can receive complete forgiveness for your sins. All of your sin can be washed away in the blood of Jesus Christ. Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus will be saved.

Luke 23:44-49

Unbelievers gave glory to God at the death of the Lord Jesus. God confirmed this was his son through signs which people saw at the death of Jesus. At the sixth hour darkness was over all the earth until the ninth hour. The sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent. The Lord Jesus cried with a loud voice, and said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit", and then he died. The Roman centurion who stood by proclaimed, "Certainly this was a righteous man."

People knew. People know today. People know when the Lord Jesus died on the cross that the whole world changed. Even to this day people either love the Lord Jesus or they hate him. There is no middle ground with the Lord. This demonstrates the reality of the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. This was the most important event in all of human history.

This will determine your eternal destiny. If you humble your heart and believe the gospel you can be saved. You can receive eternal life and go to heaven when you die. However, if you reject the gospel and the message of the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection then you will spend eternity separated from your creator. What does it mean to be separated from the giver of life, and light, and love, and all that is good? What does it mean?

You get one glimpse of that eternity here at Calvary. Darkness. A darkness that covered everything. That will be part of a your eternity separated from God. Do you want to exist in darkness?

Turn to Jesus now. Repent of your sins, confess your sins to God, and put your faith in what the Lord Jesus accomplished upon the cross that day. Put your faith in the Lord Jesus and his work of saving your soul through his death, burial, and resurrection.

Whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

John 3:15, *"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."*

John 11:26, [Jesus said] *"And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"*

Luke 23:50-56

Joseph of Arimathea requested from Pilate the body of the Lord Jesus Christ. He wrapped the Lord's body in linen and laid it in a tomb that was hewn out of stone. No one was ever buried in this tomb before Jesus. The women who followed the Lord went to the tomb to see where the Lord was laid so they could return with spices and ointments to anoint the Lord's body.

This scene is part of the gospel message we preach. The Lord Jesus died for our sins, and he was buried. Here we see the literal fulfillment of prophecy that said he would make his grave with the rich in his death.

The grave would not hold him for long. He would rise from the dead on the third day. 1 Corinthians 15:55, *"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"*

God the Father placed those who believe into Christ and united us together with him in death and in burial. This was why when we were baptized in water we were fully submerged underneath the water. We were buried together with the Lord Jesus.

Romans 6:3-5, *"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:"*

We died with Christ. We were buried together with him. We were raised together with the Lord. We ascended with him and are now seated together with him in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 2:5-6, *"Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."*

We were buried with Christ. What does this mean? It means that this world no longer has any right or power over us anymore. Stop living like you belong to this world. You belong to the Lord Jesus now.

You are united together with the Lord forever. Your citizenship is no longer in this world but in the kingdom of God. Learn to live according to the truth which God's word declared about you.

Risen From The Dead – Luke Chapter 24

Luke 24:1-12

The women who were mentioned in the previous chapter and who followed Joseph to the tomb returned again to the tomb on the morning of the first day of the week. This was Sunday morning. Their plan was to anoint the Lord's body with their spices. However, they did not find the Lord's body.

Instead, they found the stone rolled away and met two men in shining garments. They asked a question: "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" We have the proclamation of the good news. The Lord Jesus was risen from the dead. These two men reminded the women of what the Lord Jesus told them.

The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

They remembered his words! The Lord brought back to their memory everything he said to them. The women returned to the disciples and told them what they saw and heard.

Incredibly, the disciples did not believe the testimony of the women. But something motivated Peter to run back to the tomb. He found the situation as the women described it. He wondered what happened.

The empty tomb was irrefutable proof that Jesus Christ rose from the dead on the third day. This is the heart of our faith. The Lord Jesus rose from the dead on the third day.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4, *"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that **Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:**"*

Romans 10:9-13, *"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt **believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For **whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**"***

2 Timothy 2:8, *"Remember that **Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel:**"*

The Lord Jesus rose from the dead. He is seated at the right hand of God and is making intercession for us. He will return again in power and glory and rule over all the nations of the earth.

Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved. Call on his name today! Today is the day of salvation.

Luke 24:13-35

Two sad disciples of the Lord walked to Emmaus when the Lord Jesus came up and walked with them. What a wonderful picture this was of how tender hearted the Lord was to care about them. He comforted those who were cast down and discouraged. How did he help them? He pointed them to the Bible and exhorted them to believe everything the Bible said about himself. Study the scriptures. In the Bible you find a sign pointing to the Lord Jesus Christ. Now believe the witness and the testimony of the law and the prophets and come to the Lord Jesus. These men believed the word the Lord Jesus spoke to them. When they sat down to eat the Lord Jesus broke bread and blessed it and then their eyes were opened and they knew who he was.

As we study scripture the Lord reveals himself to us. As we eat the bread of life and as we break bread and eat then we see. We receive revelation of who the Lord truly is. We can see! The Lord is risen indeed.

The disciples ran back to Jerusalem and told the other disciples that the Lord Jesus was risen indeed. They began to recount to the other disciples how the Lord revealed himself in the breaking of bread.

The Lord Jesus encourages us to read, study, and meditate upon scripture in order to understand who he is. The greatest resource you have available to you is the Holy Bible. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you understanding and study to show yourself approved unto God.

I notice in this passage how the Lord Jesus acted as if he would keep walking. He waited to be invited in. The Lord waits for us to invite him into our heart, into our life, into our home, and into our family. The Lord waits for us to invite him into our life. How do we do this? We can start by calling upon the name of the Lord. We can start by believing his word in the Holy Bible.

Remember the Lord is risen. He is alive. He walks with us. He knows what we think, how we feel, and is filled with compassion and has a tender heart toward us. We can talk to the Lord about anything, ask him any question, and cast all of our cares upon him. He cares for us.

Luke 24:36-53

The Lord Jesus appeared in the midst of his disciples. They were afraid of him at first and thought he was a ghost. But he convinced them it was truly himself and that he was not a ghost. He asked for something to eat and ate a piece of fish and honeycomb in front of them.

He opened their understanding of the scripture and showed them everything in the Bible which pointed to his death, burial, and resurrection.

Then he told them what would happen next. He told them to stay in Jerusalem until they received the promise of the Father and they would be filled with power from on high. This was described in more detail in Acts chapter 1.

Then the Lord Jesus led them out as far as Bethany and he was parted from them and went up into heaven. They worshiped the Lord and then returned to Jerusalem with great joy. They were continually in the temple praising and blessing God.

God's word shall be fulfilled. Everything written in the Holy Bible will be fulfilled exactly as it is written. The Lord Jesus will return again to planet earth. He will return and establish his kingdom over all the nations. This is what we are looking forward to. The Lord will return soon. Let's continue to lift up our head because our redemption is drawing near.

Mike Kines
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